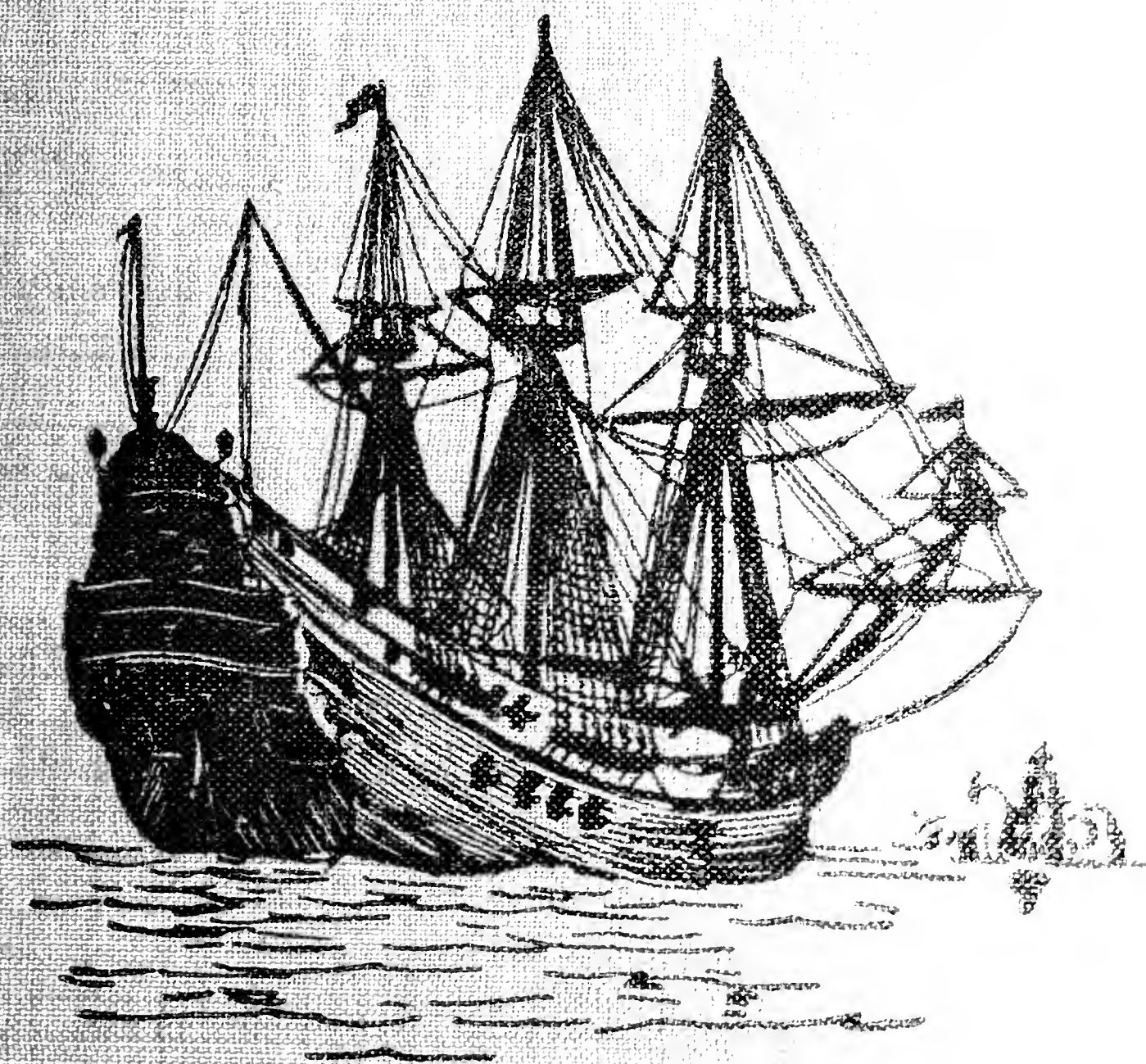


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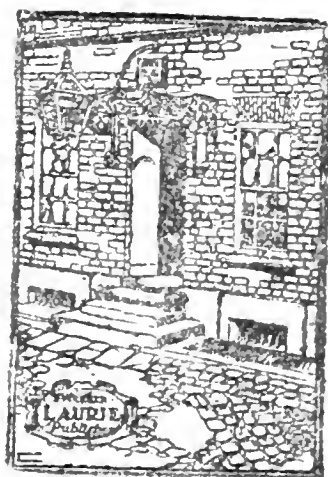
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GENOA AND  

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THE RIVIERAS  

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*Audit homo, tangit, gustat, videt, olfacit. Istos  
Nominibus Sensus noscere quinque juuat.  
Addidit hæc Natura homini fomenta creato,  
Atque feris, animæ consocianda suæ*

*Crispin van der Pass*

*inventor excudit*

## THE FIVE SENSES.

A Genoese Idyll.

AFTER AN ENGRAVING BY CRISPIN VAN DER PASS.

Circa, 1595.

# HEROINES OF GENOA AND THE RIVIERAS

BY

John EDGCUMBE STALEY

*Author of*

*"Tragedies of the Medici," "The Dogaressas of Venice," etc.*

ILLUSTRATED



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To  
MY CONSTANT FRIEND  
MARY E. MAXWELL

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## PREFACE

“HEROINES OF GENOA”—yes, there were thousands of them in every age and in every class. “Heroines,” perhaps not of the heroic line of the Maids of Kent, Orleans and Saragossa, but “Heroines” of the common life; “Heroines” of intrigue, “Heroines” of fashion, and “Heroines” of pleasure. Still there were “Heroines” of the line of Grace Darling, Florence Nightingale and Sister Dora; “Heroines” of the cloister, the poorhouse and the prison, and “Heroines” of literature and science, and of women’s rights—thousands of “Heroines,” simple and noble!

A few of *my* “Heroines” are known, at least by name, to my readers, but the majority are entirely new acquaintances. In introducing so many *débutantes* I carefully observe the conventions of good society, where fresh attractions of agreeable people are discovered incidentally, and without fuss or flattery. In this spirit, I am sure, “Heroines of Genoa” will be welcomed, and I pride myself that they will gain admiration and form permanent friendships.

## Preface

In the arrangement of my work I have taken as my base rock the contents of diaries I have made during visits to Genoa, and the two Rivas, and I have elaborated my personal impressions and knowledge of Genoa and the Genoese. Authorities on Genoese history are inconspicuous : in English the only really useful book is Theodore Bent's "Genoa." Living authorities in Genoa are unwilling to afford information and little can be got, as we would not have expected, from the Biblioteca Civica. The two tales from Boccaccio, which I have introduced, I have collated and amplified by my reading of the originals, whence the poet-writer gathered his materials. I had proposed to tell some Corsican stories—and there are many still untold—but this volume could not contain them.

With respect to illustrations there has been difficulty. Access to palaces and villas in Genoa is always restricted, and more often refused than not. The Genoese dislike taking foreigners into their confidence, and, as a rule, point-blank decline to be informative. For various reasons—loss of fortune chiefly—works of arts, which once adorned those superb edifices, have disappeared, and what remains are, sad to say, either perished through neglect or spoiled by

## Preface

inexpert renovation. Tobias Smollett, in his "Travels through France and Italy," first published in 1766, had a like experience. He says : " I had a curiosity to see the palaces of the Doria and Durazzi, but it required more trouble to obtain admission than I was willing to give myself."

No one has done for Genoa what Alinari, Brogi and Anderson have done for other Italian cities. Comparatively few pictures and other art objects have been photographed. Of Van Dyck's " Gallery of Genoese Beauties " not more than a score out of seventy-two have been reproduced. Of native artists, who painted portraits, the more remarkable were Perino del Vaga, Luca Cambiaso, Frate Bernardo Strozzi (" *il Cappuchino*"), G. B. Castello, G. B. Carbone, and the woman painter Sofonisba Lomellina, but very few of their works have been photographed or sketched. Typical of the scanty knowledge we have of Genoese painters and paintings is the brief story of the " Lomellini Family " in the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh. Mr Caw, the Director, to whom I am indebted, says : " There is very little information available about Van Dyck's ' Lomellini Family ' . . . Andrew Wilson, the Scottish painter, purchased it from its owner, the Marchese Luigi



## Preface

Lomellini, in whose palace Wilkie had seen it, for the Royal Institution, Edinburgh."

My acknowledgments are also tendered to the Right Honourable the Lord Lucas for permission to reproduce his painting by Van Dyck, "The Balbi Children," now on loan to the London National Gallery. His lordship can, alas, give no information about the picture. The coloured plate, which forms the frontispiece, is after an engraving by Crispin Van der Pass, the Elder, who, passing through Genoa to Florence, in 1580, or thereabouts, made several studies of Ligurian *genre*. This particular engraving represents "The Five Senses," each ministering to man's carnal enjoyment—the special characteristic of the self-indulgent and self-centred men of the "Proud City."

This volume is a companion to my "Famous Women of Florence" (1909), and "Dogaressas of Venice" (1910), and I trust "Heroines of Genoa" will meet with as favourable a reception as reviewers and the public at large accorded them.

EDGCUMBE STALEY.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 888. Genoa recognised as a Republic by Charlemagne.
- 904. Basilica of San Siro built.
- 958. Rights of Commune granted by Berengarius II.
- 967. Aleramo First Signore di Ligure.
- 975. Saracens expelled from the Rivas.
- 985. Cathedral of San Lorenzo founded,—rebuilt 1180.
- 992. Marriage of Ardoino da Narbonna and Oria Della Volta.
- 1070. Struggle with Pisa began.
- 1088. The City first divided into *Sestieri*.
- 1096. First Crusade—Godfroi de Bouillon in Genoa.
- 1098. St John Baptist's body translated to Genoa.
- 1098. Women's veils—black and white—first ordered.
- 1099. State Records of Genoa commenced.
- 1100. Caffaro's "*Annali*" written.
- 1102. First "Consuls" elected.
- 1118. Pope Gelasius II. in Genoa.
- 1132. Corsica given to Genoa by Lothair.
- 1134. First Palace built—Negroni.
- 1146. War with Saracens.
- 1148. Public Debt registered.
- 1148. Second Crusade—Emperor Conrad and Louis XI. in Genoa.
- 1150. The Mole built.
- 1152. Archbishopric created.
- 1158. Frederic Barbarossa in Genoa.
- 1160. First Genoese Troubadour—Marsillio Forchetto.
- 1162. The Rivas acquired.
- 1189. Third Crusade—Richard Cœur de Lion in Genoa.

# Chronology

- 1191. Castle of Monaco built.
- 1194. First Podesta appointed—Giacobo Marini da Milano.
- 1208. Genoese in Cyprus.
- 1212. Children's Crusade arrives in Genoa.
- 1243. Pope Innocent IV.—first Genoese Pope.
- 1248. First public sale of slaves.
- 1256. *Cassacie* (Trade Guilds) established.
- 1260. Banco di San Giorgio founded.
- 1270. First "*Capitani*" elected—Oberto Doria and Oberto Spinola.
- 1276. Docks and Harbour built, streets paved.
- 1284. Battle of Meloria—Pisa beaten finally.
- 1290. First "*Libro d'Oro*" compiled.
- 1298. Battle of Curzola—Venice beaten.
- 1301. Women's Crusade organised.
- 1311. Henry VII. and Margaretha in Genoa.
- 1317. Ghilbellines *versus* Guelfs.
- 1318. *Lanterna* built and lighted—re-erected 1543.
- 1339. First Doge chosen—Simone Boccanegro.
- 1340. "Company of the Caravans" founded.
- 1348. Plague. Women's heroism.
- 1354. Battle of Sapienza—Venice beaten.
- 1379. Battle of Pola—Venice beaten.
- 1380. Three Orders scheduled—1. Nobles ; 2. Citizens ; 3. Populace.
- 1389. Pope Urban VI. in Genoa.
- 1397. Charles VII. in Genoa.
- 1414. Family Feuds at their height.
- 1435. Great famine. Women's heroism.
- 1438. René d'Anjou in Genoa.
- 1456. Terrible earthquake. Women's heroism.
- 1468. Hundreds of female slaves in Genoa.
- 1477. Columbus honoured—died in Genoa 1506.
- 1493. Intensely cold winter. Women's heroism.
- 1498. Louis XII. in Genoa.

# Chronology

- 1511. “ *La Pragmatica* ” regulates women’s rights.
- 1525. Andrea Doria—Master of Genoa.
- 1532. Charles V. in Genoa.
- 1540. *Cicisbiatura* at its zenith.
- 1541. Fieschi Conspiracy.
- 1560. *Albergo de’ Poveri* founded—Emmanuale Brignole.
- 1625. Anthony Vandyck in Genoa—paints *Gentildonne*.
- 1626. Virgin Mary proclaimed “ Queen of Genoa.”
- 1684. Louis XIV. Master of Genoa.
- 1729. Corsica lost.
- 1744. War of Succession—Genoa betrayed.
- 1748. General Peace—Genoa weakened.
- 1793. Last “ *Libro d’Oro*.”
- 1797. End of the Genoese Republic.
- 1815. Genoa incorporated in Kingdom of Sardinia.

“ Un dolce amor di patria.  
Si pianti in questi lidi  
Ognun s’allegri e gridi,  
Viva la Liberta ! ”

*The Swan Song of Genoa.*



## INTRODUCTION

### I

“*Genova la Superba!*”—“Genoa the Proud!”  
Had ever a city a more arrogant title?

“Ecco! vediam la maestosa, immensa  
Città, che al mar le sponde, il dorsa ai monte.  
Occupa tutta, e tutta a cerchio adorna.”<sup>1</sup>

So exclaimed Saviero Bettinelli, Jesuit, poet and critic, a native of Liguria, and a perfect embodiment of the literary Italian of the eighteenth century. Proud as Lucifer himself, he was a beau-ideal panegyrist of his state and city. He regarded Dante and Shakespeare as boastful barbarians and the countries of their birth as upstarts among the nations of the world. His inspiration was that of extravagant egotism, the same which caused the Genoese of every age and degree to lift up their heads arrogantly, and to press down their feet disdainfully, before the citizens of other lands.

Genoa was founded, if tradition lies not, by one Janus, of the early lineage of the patriarch Abra-

<sup>1</sup> “Behold! the proud and stately city uprears  
Herself ’twixt narrow beach and mountain range  
Scarce restrained by wall on wall in tiers!”

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ham—head of a roving Urian family—her fame and greatness were established by another Janus, grandson of that world-wide famous navigator, Noah—he made her “Mistress of the Seas.” Cataclysms of nature prepared the way for evolutions of mankind and “Janua,” her early name, emerged from regions of mythology as the “Open Gate” of the progress of the universe. Phœnicians, Greeks and Romans left individual marks upon that Ligurian shore and upon its aboriginal inhabitants, and mingled the characteristics of their civilisations with the rudeness of robber captains of the hills and alien freebooters of the seas. Then Lombards of the north encountered Saracens of the south and piled up the stones of Genoa, until the Franks came and took toll of both, and knit in one the various entities of the Ligurian commonwealth. All these mighty forces treated the conquered Januati as menials and slaves, but these, by the law of survival of the fittest, absorbed their masters in a common humanity, before historians had arisen to tell of Genoa and her people.

The Ligurian Janua—at first a struggling congerie of reed and bramble huts, along the littoral, became a stone quarry of crenelated buildings—“the city of a thousand towers and twice a hundred churches.” If fabled patriarchs were the supposititious fathers of “Genoa the Proud,” her unquestioned foster-father-founder



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was the grand Charlemagne. He made of her, in 880, a freewoman, a *contado*, under brilliant Count Ademarus, who built her first navy, the instrument in later days of all her riches and renown. Eighty years more and the magnificent Frankish Empire fell, and then Genoa, strong enough to stand alone, cast off her leading strings and took upon herself self-government.

The tenth century witnessed a phenomenal expansion of primitive Genoa when she waded deep in the gore of friend and foe. Time after time fierce Saracen hosts hurled themselves upon that narrow beach only to be shattered by the descendants of the Viturii of the mountains and the Janauti of the valleys ; who, burying their axes of tribal animosity, allied themselves to repel the common foe with trusty lance and deadly arrow, forebears of the famous cross-bowmen of Genoa on Crécy's stricken field. "Genoa," in these wild times, and all Liguria, was, as that quaint writer Luitprandi, in his "Chronico," has noted, "a wholesome fountain of purifying blood."

San Siro, the mother cathedral of Genoa, was founded under the protection of Saint Mary and the Twelve Holy Apostles in 904, to serve, not only as the Temple of the Divine God, but as the High Court of Justice, the Parliament House and the official residence of the city's earliest magistrates. The Christian basilica dominated

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the whole sandy beach long, long, before mole, arsenal and lighthouse—all now most famous—were raised by cunning builders. Pregnant mothers of the Commune bore children, founders of the first *nobilità*, warlike and predatory as well as peaceful and commercial in character. Social life and life political expanded, as did the clusters of mean dwellings, amid olive orchards and vineyards, under the *campanili* of Santa Maria di Castello and Santa Maria delle Vigne, and, first, a Della Volta and next a Della Corte, or some other ambitious citizen, set about the building of his *palazzo*. San Lorenzo was of later date.

By the middle of the century the Genoese had given ample evidence of stability and enterprise, and two Kings of Italy, Berengarius III. and Adalbert, granted them rights of *Commune*, and confirmed their independence and privileges—this was in 958, the year of birth of the Republic of Genoa. Less than fifty years later the infant state had grown to sovereign manhood, and all Liguria, from Ventimiglia in the west to Spezia in the east, in fief for the most part to the Papal See, became feudatory to Genoa. The “Queen City” had, moreover, become the great “Clearing House” of all the shipping of the wide-rolling Mediterranean : her ships were the floating caravans of Europe, and she had no rival on the deep—the Griffin banner floated supreme in every port.

It has been truly said that the Crusades made

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Genoa Sovereign of the Main : her ensign flew side by side with the Banner of the Cross on ships that carried to Palestine, first in twos and threes, and then in serried phalanxes, pilgrims and warriors, devoutly to pray at, or stoutly to fight for, the Holy Places of the Christian faith. With the doubtful innocence of the serpent and with the suspicious cunning of sucking doves, Genoese shippers and traders caused their crusading galleys to exploit the rich resources of the Eastern states. No seafaring power dared to try conclusions with her, until pushful Pisa raised her head, and, for her ambition and her pains, received not one but many trouncings, and, at last, her sly "Fox," with the devouring "Imperial Eagle" on its back, was crushed by the wily "Griffin," to rise no more.

*"Griſus ut has angit  
Sic hostes Janua frangit,"*

was the proud motto of Genoa, first hoisted over the Bank of Saint George, that splendid and unique institution, the very heart's core of her existence.

It was Pisan hate, Tuscan hate, none more fierce, which gave forth to the hustling wind the cutting satire :

*"Mare Senza Pesce, Montagne Senza Alberi, Uomini Senza Fede, E Donne Senza Vergogna !"* <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sea without fish, mountains without trees, men without faith, women without shame !

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Dante Alighieri inscribed the Tuscan stigma of Genoa, when he gave utterance to that aphorism in the “*Inferno*,” xxxiii. 151–153 :

“ Ahi Genovesi, uomini diversi  
D’ogni costume, e pien d’ogni magagna ;  
Per ché non siete voi del mondo spersi ? ”

This is surely gratuitous abuse on the part of the poet, and certainly very ungenerous. He had communings we know with Virgil, the Roman poet-philosopher, and, apparently, the Tuscan laureate’s manners had been corrupted through that evil association ! Dante must have recalled those lines in the “*Æneid*” : “ Like a true Ligurian born to cheat, at least when Fortune favours his deceit.”

This “impression” Dante should have taken metaphorically, for was he not beholden to Conte Franchescino Malaspina, a Genoese noble, for sanctuary and patronage at Sarzana, in Lunigiana, on his way to France through Genoa ; and did he not gain inspiration on the Riviera de Levante, Genoa’s territory, for the completion of his “*Divina Commedia*” ?

Wise or crafty, as you will, Genoa succeeded in wresting her keys from Pisa and very nearly

<sup>1</sup> “ Genoa ! Men, alas, perverse in every way,  
With every foulness stain’d ;  
Why are ye not from Earth for ever spurn’d away ? ”

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laid hold, as well, upon the State sword of Venice. After the undoing of Pisa, the Most Serene Republic was her only foe upon the high seas. The naval battles off Curzola, Sapienza, and Pola, and the capture of Chioggia almost broke the power of Venice, and heartened greatly the men and women folk of Genoa and their rulers. Patriots and heroes, and heroines too, in will, if not in fight, were bred and born in Liguria in those wild days of tragedy.

The carnage of Curzola, in 1298, was marked by two acts of heroic self-sacrifice—one Genoese, one Venetian. Lamba Doria, the Admiral of Genoa, took with him, for his baptism of blood, his dearly loved and comely only son and heir. Lad-like the youth sought distinction without discretion, and fell, pierced by Venetian arrows, at the opening of the action. Distracted by his loss, Lamba cried aloud to heaven for vengeance, and then he took up his darling boy's dead body, into his quivering arms, and, bidding his crew attend, exclaimed: "My only son died for his country—to that country I dedicate his memory. Why weep, my men, be up and follow him. Behold, this is his tomb!" With that he cast the corpse into the churning sea, and then he cried: "Now to arms for Saint George and Genoa!" On the other side Andrea Dandolo, the Venetian Admiral-in-Chief, staggered by the exulting cries of citizens of Genoa as they thronged the shore

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to welcome home their victorious warriors, and to asperge their prisoners, refused to show himself to the women and the girls and, rather than be borne a captive to adorn Lamba Doria's triumph, he dragged himself the whole length of his chains. Then, turning swiftly back again, he dashed his head against the mast, and so he died for Venice !

### II

It is an exceedingly difficult matter to trace the origin, descent and ramifications of the more considerable families of Genoa. In the earliest "*Libro d'Oro*"—"Golden Book of Nobility"—the following twenty-eight "Houses" are named : Calvo, Cattaneo, Centurione, Cicola, Cibo, Doria, Fiesco, Fornaro, Franco, Gentile, Grilla, Grimaldo, Guistiniano, Imperiale, Interiano, Lascaro, Lomellino, Marino, Negro, Negrone, Pallavicino, Pinello, Promontorio, Salvago, Saulo, Spinola, Usodemare and Vivaldo. The Embriachi, Della Volta, Della Corte, Della Torre, and very many other ancient and prominent families are not named, and yet, for example of nobility, to Guglielmo Embriaco, in 1099, the highest honours the city could offer to a renowned citizen were accorded, and his twelfth-century stone tower, alone of a thousand, remains to-day, pretty much in its original condition.

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To four of these “*Alberghi*” or “Houses” precedence over all others was accorded, the Doria, Fieschi, Grimaldi and Spinola, who, in later days, were raised to European princely rank and bore royal crowns. Four other families were regarded as leaders in civic eminence—Adorni, Fregosi or Campo-Fregosi, Guarchi and Montaldi, and by their members the Dogeship was almost exclusively administered. In the fifteenth century the “*Libro d'Oro*” enrolled thirty-five “*Alberghi*,” but of the original twenty-eight — Fornari, Franchi, Guistiniani, Imperiali, Interiani, Pallavicini, Promontori and Sauli had disappeared, and the following fifteen families were added—Campione, Cammilla, Carmandino, Columno, Demare, Gualtero, Italiano, Lecavelle, Marchione, Pansano, Ritualare, Serra, Squarciafico, Strago and Vente.

Each ancient “*Albergo*” was regarded as a clan or a union of families, and “Houses” not already enrolled in the “*Libro d'Oro*” were obliged to attach themselves to one or other of these noble clans. For example, the Grimaldi absorbed the Carlo, Castello and Oliva families: on the other hand the members of an “*Albergo*” might separate from their head and unite themselves to other families. In this way the Cattanei were split up amongst the Della Volta, Centurioni, Gentili, Pinelli, Salvaghi, Interiani, Franchi and Guistiniani. In private

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matters each associated family retained and used its original name, but politically, commercially, and for warlike purposes, the designation of the “*Albergo*” was employed. This extraordinary system led, as it might well have been expected to do, to confusion, discontent and quarrelling. Giustiniani, the famous Genoese historian, noted the condition of social matters as early as 1190. “The City,” he says, “had increased in power and riches, but much more in ambition, and there reigned discord, disunion and conspiracy : full of hatred and violence, many strove to rule the State in their own fashion.”

Several illustrious “Houses” preferred to sink their titles of nobility and enrol themselves among the untitled democracy rather than be absorbed by some recently aggrandised family. An example of the irregularity of nomenclature was afforded in the fourteenth century, when a Castello accepted noble rank in the Grimaldi “*Albergo*,” whilst his brother became one of the people, dropping his family surname and calling himself simply by his first name, Giustiniano. Again, to add to the complexity of matters nominal, very many citizens, in a sort of way, evaded the letter of the law by affixing a noble title with a hyphen to their own family name. A Rapallo for instance wrote himself Sauli-Rapallo, and a Morello, Negroni-Morello. As time went on, many other families rose to



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eminence and additional creations of nobility followed. Up to the end of the sixteenth century five hundred families had been enrolled as noble, but by the middle of the following century two hundred and fifty-five noble houses had become extinct. The “*Libro d'Oro*” of the eighteenth century contains no more than one hundred and three names of titled families.

Members of the old nobility—the original twenty-eight “*Alberghi*”—always looked down with unmitigated contempt upon the newly ennobled families. They styled themselves as of the “*Porto Vecchio*” and stigmatised the newcomers as of the “*Porto Nuovo*.” They proudly bore sky-blue banners as tokens of their *sangue celeste*—blue-blood, whilst to the more modern “Houses” were allotted ensigns of grass-green. A third grade of nobility was also introduced for such families as were not noble but of pre-eminence in civic circles. “*Nobili Cittadini*” were given the designation “*Porto del Popolo*.” This hypersensitiveness was provocative in a high degree of rivalries and feuds which parted, and again reunited, “Houses” and families. Each man and woman became self-centred and self-seeking, each family greedy only of family advantage, and each “*Albergo*” an aggregation of irreconcilable parties. There was absolutely no public spirit in the peaceful administration

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of the State, and in times which threatened war no sense of patriotism. Another's hurt was the universal aim of rich and poor in Genoa, for between 1221-1671 there are recorded, in the annals of the city, thirty-two considerable conspiracies, whilst of petty acts of violence the list is endless. Father denounced son, and son father, and women gave their own and their lovers indiscriminately away, until every street and *salita*, or climbing footway, was covered with dead bodies and with weapons cast aside. The churches were filled with monks and women praying, and the people's homes with children crying bitterly. In vain the clergy perambulated the city bearing the Sacred Host and holy relics. Men, boys and even women, fought out their animosities to a finish. Added to the jealousies of families were the antagonisms of the "*Rampini*"—Guelphs and the "*Mascherotti*"—Ghibellines. Foreigner usurpers and mercenaries added to the carnage of the squares and quays, and Genoese hesitated not to betray each other into the hands of the oppressors of the Republic. The year 1414 saw, perhaps, the culmination of internecine troubles—a terrible record of feud and fight. John Evelyn, in his travel notes, refers to the calamities of those days: "This beautiful city," he says, "is more stayn'd with horrid acts of revenge and murder than any other place in Europe. It is a gally

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matter to carry a knife whose point is not broken off."

But, just as the fires of Rome gradually burnt themselves out and the Parisian "Reign of Terror" quietly passed away, so Genoese anarchy ceased by degrees, and the "Truce of Mary" was accepted by every class and grade. So long ago as 1162 the Consuls had, amid universal religious enthusiasm, placed Genoa and the Genoese directly under the blue robe of St Mary and had proclaimed her to be "Reginae Sovrana di Genova e di tutto il Dominio"—and, moreover, had enacted that every child should at baptism be presented at the altar of "Maria Santissima" within the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, and should bear her name. The cult of Mary, "Queen of Genoa" received a remarkable impetus in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, perhaps a reflex of the proclamation by Fra Girolamo Savonarola of Florence as the "City of Jesus Christ." Through all the long vista of years nothing glimmered more persistently than the latent piety of the people of Liguria. Experience of the world's history emphasises the fact that the strongest natures are just those most easily affected by religion. The religious temperament was the pulse of life in Genoa—engendered by the Crusades and matured by the conspiracies. When visitors asked for a token of this characteristic, they were taken courteously and shown

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the great city wall which the men and women, and children too, of Barbarossa's day built, with ecstatic energy, "to keep out temporal tyrants and preserve the liberties of Saint Mary." Centuries later this exuberant devotion to St Mary found emphatic expression. The mountain sanctuary of "Nostra Signora della Guardia," in the valley of Polcevera, was being raised, and the people of Genoa, and the adjoining villages, formed themselves into processions after working hours each Saturday evening, and wound their way laboriously up the steep path, lighted by the torches they bore. Everybody carried also an offering of some sort in kind, chiefly of building materials, and, as they advanced, they sang hymns to St Mary, and, on their return, "*Nenie Popolari*"—folk-songs of chivalry and romance.

"E lo mi domo m'ha mandato adire  
Chè mi proveda, chè mi vol lasciare  
Questi suo culpi, da fachi mi morire."<sup>1</sup>

The "Truce of Mary" was the heyday of Genoa: then weapons of war were sheathed, and the implements of peace spread out. The struggle for mastery was intermitted, and with mastery came satisfaction, self-control and

<sup>1</sup> "My sweetheart says of me he's tired,  
I must look elsewhere, pity me!  
His is the fault, but ah! I shall die!"

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peaceful emulation. When a Genoese had made up his mind to any line of action he persevered against all obstacles until he attained his purpose : he was a living example of the old Roman proverb : “ *Fons aperta, lingua parca, mens clausa.* ” So, gathering up his toga, the outer garment of a thousand years—black or scarlet according to his rank—and straightening his *berretta* upon his curly head or bald, each man entered with his whole soul into another new and absorbing competition—the building of homesteads. Something like the fierce modern rush to Eldorado goldfields was the contest for sites in the Strada Nuova and Strada Balbi. Swiftly every claim was taken up and the unlucky hindmost had to put up with “ Devil’s luck ” in the adjoining streets and lanes. With the wand of a magician the Perugian architect, Galeazzo Alessi, and his associates transformed the city in a trice. Every noble family saw a palace rise—each more wonderful than its neighbour. Money, hitherto wasted in fruitless quarrel, was now expended in wholesome rivalry, and Genoa became a city of palaces, more numerous and magnificent than those of any other city.

Petrarch—Laura’s laureate-lover—once reproached the Genoese gently but sternly for their disorders and misfortunes. “ Dost thou,” he exclaimed, “ remember what time thy sons and daughters were the happiest people the fair world

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over ? Then, thy glorious country was a celestial paradise, no Elysian fields more lovely. What a majestic aspect Genoa presented from the open sea ! Church towers reaching up into the heavens, hills clothed with green flowering trees of Hymen and Eden. Marble palaces raised on quaint rocky spurs with delicious harbours all around them, where Nature permitted Art to complete her ravishing toilet ! No sailor ever came in shore but ceased his warring with the waves to gaze spellbound upon her enchantments. The men and women of the Regal City, arrayed right royally and satiated with luxuries known only in Royal Courts, astonished travellers from all lands unaccustomed to such splendours. The foot of strangers scarce crossed her sumptuous thresholds ere eyes were raised expectantly to read blazoned upon the gorgeous lintels : “ This is the Proud City of Kings ! ”

“ Genoa, Proud Queen of the Seas.  
Thy mantle green mountain and trees,  
Thy Sceptre rules Neptune and Mars,  
Thy crown Madonna’s Seven Stars,  
Thy throne on great Palaces rests,  
Thy footstool’s where break the wave crests.  
Genoa ! ”

# HEROINES OF GENOA AND THE RIVIERAS

## CHAPTER I

### CHRIST AND CUPID

#### I

“FOR Christ and Cupid!”—the impassioned cry of Christendom what time valiant Crusaders and gallant Troubadours, linking arm in arm and crossing sword and mandolin, prayed and marched, and sang and danced through every state of Europe. Christ’s ensign bore the crimson Cross of Calvary: Cupid’s the crimson heart of chivalry. Nowhere was devotion to the double cult more fervent, constant and more convincing than in Genoa of Liguria. There foregathered, during the whole span of three long centuries of strenuous years, all that was renowned of wholesome manhood, on foot, on horse, on board. Pontiffs, sovereigns, statesmen, soldiers, monks and palmers crossed and recrossed the sandy beach and narrow crooked streets, cheek by jowl with errant knights and minstrels—Love’s messengers and adventurers.

Martial strains, the chants of Holy Church,

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and Love's sweet ditties made the softly kissing Ligurian air eloquent, and echoes full of harmony ran along storeyed palace and crenelated wall, and away beyond, caught on the crests of towers and spires, they tossed themselves melodiously through rustling forest trees and swept breezily up the rolling mountain sides. Peasants of the hills and valleys, with all the dwellers in the *contado*, gathered up their loins and sped along to crowd still more suffocatingly the congested city bounds—there to gaze and gaze and wonder at the raree shows. Pageants, plays and functions — religious, amorous and warlike — were enacted in every quarter and in every church. Fearful blushing maidens and bolder titled matrons leaned out of gaily decorated iron balconies or stood by heavily gated portals, one moment to cross themselves as “*Il Santissimo*” —the Sacred Host—was borne past in solemn panoply : the next to toss scented kisses with red roses to gay cavaliers in return for their salutes. The busy women of the harbour, the markets and the alleys shared their richer sisters' infatuation : every lass had her foreign lover as well as her jealously devoted Giovanni Battista, and everyone loved Christ the Son of Mary.

As in the days of Genoa's boyhood, hordes of invaders, ruthless then, made of the peaceful Ligurian shore an arena of butchery and de-





LA MARCHESA GIOVANNA CATTANEO.

Anthony Vandyck.

PALAZZO CATTANEO, GENOA.



## Christ and Cupid

struction, and troop on troop of spoilers laid bare the smiling countryside ; so in the days of the Troubadours and Crusaders Love ravished the manhood and womanhood of Genoa. Hearts were broken ruthlessly while those who broke them sailed out of the old port of Genoa to the blessed shores of Palestine. “ *Benvenuto !* ”—“ *Addio !* ” “ Welcome ! ”—“ Farewell ! ” and “ Come back again quite soon ! ” were the greetings of Genoese and their passing guests which fluttered with the unfurling of the sails of the great galleys in the offing of the port. Each pilgrim, gay or serious, was pledged to wrest back for Christ His Holy Places, but the gay Troubadour of the armed hosts had to win by the way for himself a blushing bride. Prince Cupid was supreme.

A very quaint tale, as old as the days of Holy John of Damascus, seems to give us a happy reason for the genesis and the escapades of Prince Cupid : “ A certain king had an only son, who, for fear of evil influences, was secluded in a fortress until he approached the age of fourteen. Being brought forth one brilliant summer’s day the sights of earth were revealed in order to the lad—men and women, gold and precious stones, garments and tapestries, chariots and horses, oxen and sheep, and birds and flowers. He was asked which of all the splendid objects pleased him most. Pointing without a moment’s hesi-

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tation to a group of beauteous maidens he desired to learn by what name they were known. An attendant, standing by, jocosely told the young prince that they were called 'Devils who catch men!' Presently the king came to greet his son and he inquired of him which of all the things he had seen he most admired and most desired. The youth promptly answered the question: 'Give me the devils who catch men!' " And so it was, for, with his boyish bow and arrow, at the behest of his "Devils," he sought his victims here, there and everywhere. Alas, that fifteenth-century Tuscan saying: "Devils (women) cause everything to lose its virtue!" was echoed in every bay and gully of the Rivas.

With Petrarch, in his "*Triumphus Cupidini*," we may say:

"Lo! this is he whom the world calls 'Love'—  
A bitter master as thou shalt prove

Some doth he slay, some 'neath grievous laws  
Alas! unlov'd,—in vain his bow he draws."

But so it was, so it is, and so it shall be while ever girls develop into women and boys put forth their manhood. Romance is the pulsation of life and its narratives are those which please us all the most. One love story, running betwixt Liguria and Languedoc, is hallowed by a thousand years, and yet it is still as fragrant as the flowers

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in May—it deals with the romantic origin of the proudest noble family in Genoa—the Doria.

“Pietro Rubaldo Doria was the son of Ardoino, Count of Narbonne, who married Oria di Corrado Della Volta in 992 : from whom the family of Doria takes its origin.” This is the brief matter-of-fact record of the fascinating romance of Ardoino and Oria—but now to fully tell the story.

Far away in the ninth and tenth centuries pilgrims from every empire and state marched exultingly, if painfully, in the well-worn footsteps of pious ancestors to pay their orisons before the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The Holy Places, alas ! had not only fallen into the sacrilegious hands of the Saracens, but had even dropped into ruin and neglect. Everywhere in Palestine the followers of the Crucified were treated with ignominy and injury. Tales of hardship and cruelty filtered their way through many channels—mercantile and religious—into every port, and thence spread over every land. Nowhere did these sorrowful stories meet with keener dismay and exasperation, or excite more fervent sympathy, than in the fair province of Languedoc. Its people—highly nervous and imaginative in temperament and sincerely devotional—gave heed undoubtingly to the harrowing eloquence of monks and friars whose narratives of woe fired the martial ardour of

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the inhabitants and inspired their poetic chivalry.

The Narbonnese were ever foremost in Christian duty and knightly enterprise. Rivals in every human exploit of their neighbours across the gulf — the people of Marseilles — they inherited the grace of Greece and the vigour of Rome, whilst in their veins coursed the hot blood of Hispano-Moorish sires. Each boy and maiden was a man and woman in ambition ; each man and woman a hero and heroine in action. Chivalry and religion ran in double harness, and Cupid was the jockey. For Christ's sake the maiden yielded up her lover ; the matron her life's partner. No sacrifice was too great in the interests of Christ and his suffering followers. To visit the places hallowed by Christ's life and death was to gain sure entrance into the Paradise of the Blessed : to assist His smitten ones was complete justification in righteousness. Moreover, the courageous travellers and pious champions became graduates in the polite sciences and past masters of culture and renown : the slender silver strands of Cupid's caprice became the sure golden links of Christian heroism.

It was the Feast of Pentecost, in the year 990, and the great nave of Narbonne's noble cathedral was filled with an ecstatic congregation. Belted knight and courtly esquire stood side by side with

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skilled artisan and crafty mariner — each the cynosure of a damsel's eyes and of a mother's pride—a small and noble band, to receive the benediction of Holy Church before setting out for Palestine. Not one of them was of more gracious mien than the young son of the great Count of Toulouse—the Viscount Ardoin—a scion of a line of soldier potentates famed far and wide for vaulting ambition and daring enterprise. In his eye flashed the fire of religious ardour, in his heart rang the tender chords of love—love of his mother, his home, and his bride-to-be, perchance. But, with hand upon his sword's hilt—that blade just blessed by the bishop—and his morion fitted to his head, the softer nature of the lad yielded to the manhood that was his. The way—a triumphal march indeed—was not long to the landing-stage, and to the trim ship of Narbonne lying on the salt lagunes, which was to carry heroes in embryo to Genoa, the great port of departure for the East. Last farewells were interchanged, and then with sails unloosed all speed was made along the low seaboard past Cette and Aigues Mortes to Marseilles—a course of one hundred and thirty miles or more.

The young knight knew by heart, we may be sure, the romantic story of bewitching Massalie,—she whose name is borne by the great southern port of France—the fair young daughter of a

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powerful chieftain of the fierce Segobriges—King Guan. “Six hundred years before the Christian era a Greek vessel cast anchor in the bay and warriors landed upon a certain day when the whole tribe was celebrating the majority of a young chieftainess. The strangers were made free, by the tribesmen, of board and joust, whilst Massalie, as was their custom, passed in front of each chief to make her choice of him that should be her lord and master. Holding a fine gold cup filled with rich red wine in both her hands the girl passed before Lysander, the commander of the foreign ship, and then gracefully lifted the cover for him to drink. The whole assembly broke into generous applause as the Greek drained the chalice to the dregs and then raised the blushing damsel’s lips to his own—a double pledge of peace and love. Guan, accepting the action as an omen of good fortune, promptly joined the man’s and maiden’s hands, and ordered there and then that the seashore, where they were all encamped, should be for ever held by Lysander and Massalie. Upon the very spot, where he captured his betrothed, the Greek captain drove the first piles and balks of timber, whereupon was built the earliest city of Marseilles.”

Viscount Ardoin took the story well to heart—he would be a second Lysander, and, in spite of tender thoughts of his Narbonne sweetheart,



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he resolved that when he also landed and had to view a maiden fair, she would be his Massalie. He meant to win his way to Jerusalem and to win a bride besides ! His stout Narbonne barque was now sailing in valiant company : quite a flotilla of vessels of light draught keeping together for mutual protection from dreaded pirates of the deep under shelter of the beauteous littoral. Coasting serenely away to Genoa, the crews were as motley as could be and composed of men and women of all lands, not so much bent on pilgrimage to save the Holy Sepulchre as on securing death for themselves in Palestine. It was the universal opinion in Europe generally that upon the thousandth anniversary of His birth Messiah would return to claim the kingdoms of the world for His own, and thrice happy would His servants be if they might hail His advent upon the hillsides of Bethlehem. Hence all who could hastened to the Holy Land.

In spite of the solemnity of the enterprise the voyagers gave not up all their time to psalms and players. Many a song and lilting dance and many a romantic story-telling filled up the tedium of the day. After passing the promontory of Hyères, with its Roman legends, all eyes were bent upon the venerated Îles des Lérins, and, whilst the more serious of the company recalled memories of ancient missionaries, the younger fastened their affections upon St

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Marguerite and her story. She was the sister of the sainted founder of the monastery, St Honorat. Every month, quite against the spirit of his "Rule," she visited him from her little separate cell. At last he prayed that the sea might run over the land and part them ; that very night his prayer was answered, but, to console St Marguerite, he promised that he would visit her whenever the cherry-trees blossomed. Then in turn prayed the sorrowful nun, and, happily for her, heaven decreed that the blossoming should be monthly, consequently holy Honorat's self-denial was penalised, for every month he had to cross the sea to greet his good and devout sister.

Viscount Ardoin and his fellow-passengers ran great risks of encounters with pirate vessels. The Saracens had only lately been worsted and driven out of their forts and settlements along the Riviera di Ponente, and their warships still sailed the main. The pilgrims passed unscathed beneath the foaming rock of Monocei and entered the Portus Herculis—the usual refuge of ships coasting between Languedoc and Liguria. The peaceful memories of a holy virgin would solace their anxious hearts—Devota, a Corsican maiden, martyred under Diocletian. According to the Chronicles of Lérins : " In order that Devota might not be buried by the Christian converts the Roman governor of the island ordered her

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to be cremated, and her ashes scattered, but her brother Benvenuto, a priest, and one Apollinaris, a saintly deacon, being warned by a vision, removed her body by night. They chartered the little coracle of a Christian seaman, Gratienus, and having secured his services the three set sail with their treasure hoping to make the African coast. The plan, however, was frustrated, for the frail boat was carried by wind and current to the north-west towards the shores of Liguria. The following morning, whilst Gratienus slept, the saint appeared to him in a dream and told him to continue on his course and specially to notice what should issue from her mouth and wherever it should go, for that would indicate where she wished her body to be buried. At noon the sailor awoke, and, as the sun played over the still pale face of the corpse, he was amazed to behold a white dove come forth from the mouth. The bird took to flight slowly just ahead of the boat, and made for the high land immediately above the rock of Monocei which they were approaching. The bird alighted at the entrance of the valley of Gaumates—now Condamine—north-west of the harbour. There the three landed, and reverently committed the body of the dead saint to the ground, and then and there set up a stone of record which became the foundation of a little oratory.

Little did young Viscount Ardoin dream, as

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he knelt lowly in Saint Devota's chapel, raised by pious hands and adorned with rich offerings, and craved the Virgin's protection on his outward cruise that no more than two generations should pass away before the Saracen buccaneer, Hamoudid, would despoil the shrine of his *ex voto* among the rest in the autumn of 1070. He could not know that he who should avenge the sacrilege and, with seamen ably led, destroy for ever that dreaded infidel yoke, would be none other than his own great-grandson—such happenings are in the lap of the gods. It was Ansaldo D'Oria the Third, Captain of Genoa, who finally laid low the outlaw power, and on the 27th June instituted the annual commemoration of the "Burning Boat"—the fire of Saint Devota devouring the freebooters. From Portus Herculis, or Monocei, their supplications finished and their supplies refound, the Narbonne ship and her consorts sailed forth on the last course to Genoa. What adventures befell the voyagers, and what perils they surmounted, no one has recorded. The glorious Riviera di Ponente was then, as now, a ravishing panorama, but along that delectable littoral many were the ruined villages, and the smoke of burning crops and cattle betrayed the recent presence of marauders. With grave apprehension the ships hugged the shore, ready to seek, if need arose, the sheltering harbours of Ventimiglia, Matuta (San Remo),

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Oneglia and Albenga, and so young Ardoin won his way to Genoa.

The flotilla of vessels, sighted from the beach of San Siro almost as soon as it had rounded the precipitous Capo di Noli, approached the port of Genoa with colours flying and knights' pennons on the breeze. Eyes in that clear atmosphere scarce needed a strain to take in the beauties of the scenic city, so much more diversified than any of the tablelands and lee shores of France, and voyagers looked forward joyfully to a period of rest and refreshment before transshipping for Palestine. Long before the vessel had come in shore and landing gangways were run out to the anchorage, the beach was lined with curious citizens of every degree, and matrons and maids, some on business bent, some on pleasure. Knightly ensigns upon the prows bespoke the presence on board of guests worthy of lordly welcome and noble entertainment, and so, with a courtesy begotten by nature and by tact, the city fathers foregathered to offer hospitality.

What introductions Viscount Ardoin had with him no chronicler has noted, but apparently he was regarded with the greatest estimation, for his host-to-be was none other than Messir Corrado Della Volta, the head of one of the two most distinguished families—the Della Corte and the Della Volta, and ledt he home politics

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and social economies of the city. Probably Messir Corrado was no stranger to the citizens of the Narbonne lagunes. His ships, if not his person, were well known in those western Mediterranean ports. His freights of timber, cattle, hides, wool and honey were exchanged for Narbonne coin and Narbonne salt to the benefit of both communities. With a lofty gesture, worthy of the high consular rank to which he belonged—his grandsire, Guglielmo Della Volta, had been one of the four chief magistrates scarce fifty years before—Messir Corrado welcomed the distinguished visitor and conducted him to his modest palace near the old church, the Cathedral of San Siro. Quite as likely as not, he had had direct financial dealings with the Counts of Toulouse, and with the collateral house of Narbonne, and knew something of the culture and characteristics of Languedoc. He would at all events offer the young noble the best he had, and perhaps he felt some natural pride that, plain merchant though he was, he could entertain with lordly magnificence within his domestic circle. The Della Volta was an ancient family descended from the Viturii of the highlands, who shared with the Januati of the seaboard the over-lordship of the valleys and torrents of the Lemme and Polcevera. The name “Volta” implied good fortune, and Voltaggio, which was the cradle of the race,

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was a place of good renown. Men and women of the family intermarried with the Castellani, the Cavaturni, the Delesmini, the Langaschi, and other leading families ; and as generations of the Della Volta came and went they became Lords of Lemme, Mazzoni, Faggliola and Varagine.

Not only was Messir Corrado a notable shipper and financier, but he was, like other good citizens, a philanthropist and a benefactor, and as part founder of the Church of San Lorenzo—in later days the Cathedral of Genoa—his name was held in honour, and his word counted for much in the counsels of the city. Whether he and the Madonna Della Volta were blessed with a large family we know not, but at least we know that the name was handed down for five or six hundred years in the direct male line, and that two daughters, if not more, were sharers of their parents' happy comfortable home. The name of the younger has not been preserved, but with the elder girl, called variously Oria, Orietta and Orizia, we have to do.

In gay Languedoc, as in amorous Provence, all the world sang and danced and flirted, to their heart's content—they worried little about the sordid things of life—but in Genoa the men and women were serious in demeanour, the former keen in the pursuit of commercial gain, the latter devout in the exercises of religion. All

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this and much besides would be borne in upon young Viscount Ardoin as he was made free of his host's bed and board. The fair Oria was much more coy than maidens he had left at home and very much more closely guarded by her mother; still Prince Cupid had his court in Genoa as well as in Narbonne, and his arrows were quite as sharp and as penetrating!

The change in psychic temperament was accompanied by an alteration in the Viscount's name, and Ardoin became Ardoino, or Ardronico in the musical tongue of Liguria. There was much for the young knightly pilgrim to do in Genoa, and, beneath the speaking glances of Oria Della Volta's brown eyes he did that most leisurely. His armour required readjustment and his weapons needed to be sharpened and tested, and Genoese armourers were already famous for their skill. Perchance his charger had to be sought where the war horse of the Romans was reared and trained in ancient times. The trappings of the steed, the hang of his banner, his velvet mantle of estate, and other decorative features of his outfit had to be considered. Certainly Donna Oria and her mother were called into council for advice and judgment upon such weighty matters, Then his men-at-arms and his company of camp-followers had claims on time and opportunity. All these different activities divided very pleasantly the





TYPES OF LIGURIAN WOMEN.

Ambrogio Borgognone.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



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Viscount's time with scenes of hospitality and gallantry. Had he but known the muse of Petrarch he might just as well have sung of Oria as the poet sung of Laura :

“ The light of those fond fair eyes fain  
Melts me serene and doth restrain  
My hot will with effective rein  
'Gainst which nor wit nor force attain.”

Alas, in the very midst of his youth's young dream—had he indeed met his “ Massalie ” so early in his romance ?—Viscount Ardoin fell ill. Probably he contracted intermittent fever during his voyage to Genoa, or he caught there some eastern ailment rife enough in those narrow ill-kept streets of the busy city, and his preparations for departure were interrupted. In place of sumptuous entertainment, he had to submit to bedside treatment, but this proved to be the opportunity for which Prince Cupid had been anxiously waiting—the assignation of the romance ! Madonna Della Volta of course took her distinguished patient under her own immediate charge, and the beauteous Oria was no unwilling or incompetent assistant. Here was, as we moderns say, “ the chance of a lifetime—” “ *La Volta di Momento*,” and there was only one possible way out of the situation, and that through the narrow circle of the *pegne*, or engagement ring !

Ardoino recovered rapidly, as he was bound

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to do under the circumstances, but still he made no attempt to hasten his departure. Oria's parents were no doubt conversant with the love passages—such secrets are rarely hid for long—and, whilst they regarded the lover's suit with utmost satisfaction, the common-sense of Messir Corrado dictated a courteous farewell. So Viscount Ardoino once more buckled on his armour and took his ensign in his hands, but, with the red cross of Christ upon his breast, he hung Oria's gold chain and charms around his neck, and held out his arm for her to tie thereon her silken scarf of knight errantry.

Donna Oria watched the pilgrim-galley grow less and less as it sank down beneath the far horizon beyond the coast of Corsica, and then perhaps tearfully, she took her place again beside her mother in domestic ministrations. Months came and months went, and no news of gallant Ardoino reached expectant Oria. Daily she frequented beach and boat inquiring of mariners and travellers about her pilgrim-knight in Palestine. On Sundays at Mass, and every day before shrine, she prayed to St Mary, St Nicholas of Sailors, and St George of Genoa to bring back safe her hero.

At last her prayers were granted, and once more her Ardoino held her in his strong young arms, and once more she laid her comely head upon his gallant breast. If the parting had been sorrowful the reunion was joyous and Messir

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and Madonna Corrado Della Volta entered sympathetically into their child's delight. Spoils of the East were laid at the maiden's feet—costly jewels, rare fabrics and precious marbles, pledges of the wealth with which Ardoino promised to endow his bride. That wealth, however, was far away in Languedoc and Messir Corrado's commercial instinct, backed by a Genoese love of money, required the realisation of the viscount's proposals.

Leaving hostages to love as well as to fortune the palm-wreathed Crusader traversed once more the Ligurian Sea and sought his homestead. Greeted in Narbonne with special honours—he was now full Count, his father being dead—no request of his was set aside, and his noble widowed mother held not back her consent to the spoliation of the paternal estate nor to the consummation of his marriage with Donna Oria Della Volta. The Count renounced his title and succession, and back he turned exultingly to Genoa, to receive a new name and to enter upon a new career—all for the love he bore to Oria. He would be known as “*L'Innamorato d'Oria*,” and his child should be named Ansaldo, “Reward of Waiting”—and so it was.

He and Oria had knelt at their betrothal for a priestly benediction: now was celebrated the full rite of Christian marriage, making the child Madonna Oria had borne when her lover was on the high seas legitimately his father's son. He

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was Ardoino d'Oria, the boy Ansaldo d'Oria, and thus a new family took root in Genoa, which became the mighty Doria.

Messir Corrado Della Volta was perfectly satisfied with his son-in-law's provision and he met him handsomely by allocating, as part of Donna Oria's dowry, land and buildings lying between San Siro and the shore. To this marriage portion the happy husband gave the pleasant name of "*Porto d'Oria*"—"Oria's Home" and "Ardoino's Haven"—and there he built his palace—the rooftree of the new family—where now the Albergo Della Citta gives upon the Porto Antico and the Ponte Calvi. To the first name of their first born the young couple added at confirmation, as was the Genoese custom, another Christian name, Pietro, because the child's birthday was on the feast of the two great Apostles, Peter and Paul. By a freak, not unusual in Genoa, still another name was added, or perhaps more correctly substituted—Ansaldo became Rubaldo, because of the roguish reputation that he had already earned in the chaff-chaff of the city. He was perhaps less of a "rascal"—as the word strictly means—than a keen business man in the hub of the city commerce. Three other sons were born to Ardoino and Oria—Lionardo, in 995, who became a monk; Simone, in 996—the father in turn of a family of sons; and Paolo, who died young.

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Pietro Rubaldo (Ansaldo) died the same year that saw the stately obsequies of Messir Corrado Della Volta, his grandfather. He had reached the age of twenty-five and had given promise of great commercial acumen. We know not if he left any children, but the succession to *Porto d'Oria* seems to have devolved upon the three sons of Simone—Manifredo, Niccolo, and Paolo, and in their lines the family of D'Oria, or, as a MS. of the sixteenth century has it, “*Clarissima gens de Auria*” bred and multiplied. Seven daughters also came to rejoice the hearts of their parents, but their names and dates are unrecorded, as also are the deaths of Ardoino and Oria. Messir Corrado Della Volta apparently made his daughter and son-in-law his legal heirs, for at his death much wealth came to them, and Ardoino, although of foreign birth, was admitted to full magisterial rank and was accounted one of the richest men in Genoa.

The Church of San Matteo, a mausoleum in miniature, is the shrine of the great D'Oria family. The stones are eloquent with the romantic epitaphs of the founders of the family. Tradition has it that the first little sanctuary of San Matteo was built by Ardoino d'Oria, and that his remains and his wife's were buried under the altar. The D'Oria, far and away the most notable of all the body politic of the “*Alberghi*,” grew and prospered mightily ; the grass-grown

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Piazza of San Matteo became their playground when the nursery of *Porto d'Oria* was found too circumscribed. Around the more worthy church, built by Martino d'Oria in 1125, were raised the Doria Palaces—Lamba's—the city's gift for the victory of Curzola in 1248 ; Pagano's in recognition of the triumph at Sapienza in 1354 ; and Andrea's, voted by popular acclamation in 1524.

Two other Dorias may be sympathetically mentioned here ; one Oberto, a soldier like most of the men of the family, and one, Simone, a poet-musician. In 1266 the former conquered Candia and hung the bell of Canea with the battle standard of Pisa at San Matteo—that bell became the marriage toscin of Genoa, and rang in and out as many brides as, and more than, any other bell in Christendom. Oberto Doria was the first to make the name of Doria supreme in Genoa—"born," as Cavalli wrote in an ode three hundred years after, "to be the terror of the pirate, the spurner of the foreign master, and the mainstay of peace and plenty." Simone Doria left Genoa early in the thirteenth century and settled in Naples, where he learned to love the merry life of that roystering city. As poetaster, musician, and troubadour, he struck a new note upon the family scale. He and the poet Lanfranco Cicala had been brought up together in Genoa. Both became staunch Ghi-



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bellines, but the Republican sentiments of Genoese politics drove them away to find their fortunes in other lands. Both lovelorn lads, they had proved Genoese maidens hard to woo; they parted at the *Porto d'Oria*, and one went west, the other east along the *Rivière*, but each kept in touch with the other, and met not once, but often in and out of Genoa. At one such symposium Messir Simone propounded a riddle for Messir Lanfranco's solution :

“ Which is preferable,” he asked, “ to merit the favour of a woman or only to obtain it ? ”

Cicala replied sententiously :

“ I used, Simone, to think that merit commands love ; but I have renounced that error—only daring is necessary ! ”

This seems to point the moral of the loves of Count Ardoino da Narbonna and Donna Oria Della Volta da Genoa.

A folklore song of Liguria strikes however another chord, but a chord in harmony with the twang of Simone Doria and Lanfranco Cicala's guitars :

“ Chi vuol esser amatu delle donne,  
Porte 'na grossa bursa di denari,  
E vada ben vestitur, e ben calsatu  
‘ Chè delle donne ne sura amatu ! ’ ” <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “ Who seeks by women to be loved  
His purse must first well filled be proved  
Must strut about well dressed and shod—  
Women will love him like a god ! ”

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## II

Just one hundred years after Count Ardoino returned from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem the First Crusade was preached by Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless. Godfrey de Bouillon, Count Flanders, the chosen leader of the Christian forces, embarked on board the "*Pomella*," a Genoese galley, and sailed away with his command to Palestine in 1096. Bishops of many sees and friars preached in the churches and streets of Genoa, and the great heart of Liguria was mightily moved. Tumultuously the citizens agreed to man and arm twelve great galleons of commerce and Guglielmo Embriaco was unanimously acclaimed captain of the Genoese contingent—" *Testa del Maglio* "—" Hammer-headed," as he was called in reference to his skill at the siege of Tyre, Cæsarea and Jerusalem, where he directed a novel attack under the form of great wooden towers, whence battering rams and Greek-fire issued, to the complete discomfiture of the Saracens. Torquato Tasso, in his "*Gerusalemme Liberata*," speaks thus of Embriaco :

" The bold Ligurian leader, famous engineer.  
In mechanical lore, a man without a peer."

The capture of the cities and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre were due to Genoese valour,

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and De Bouillon failed not to award crowns of palm, with many a hearty word of commendation, to the victors. Prisoners were released, women rescued, and children cared for, and gaps in the ranks of the brave besiegers were filled, not only by men, but by Christian women, emulous of the deeds of bravery of their deliverers, back with whom to Genoa they went inseparable and devoted wives. The victorious squadron sailed, not directly back to the "Proud City," but, putting into the harbour of Myrrha, a posse of seamen broke into the monastery of San Niccolo, and, despite the tears and protestations of the monks, bore off a precious silver casket, wherein were treasured the ashes of St John Baptist's cremated body. At Cæsarea, moreover, the Genoese, sharing the spoil with the Pisans, their rivals, secured possession of the "*Sacro Catino*"—the Holy Grail—the dish used at Christ's Last Passover—said to have been hollowed out of a single enormous emerald—a portion of the Queen of Sheba's gift to Solomon.

News of the seizure of priceless relics preceded the homeward-bound fleet, and, when the leading ships were descried from the Embriaco tower and other coigns of vantage, making sail from the south, all Genoa foregathered along the littoral. The bishop and the clergy of the city came forth full vested to receive and reverence the holy treasures of the Faith and ceremonially

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to deposit them in the old Church of San Sepolcro, by the harbour. Every woman and girl had been expressly bidden to cover herself with a modest veil, black or white, or scrupulously to remain indoors behind the closed jalousies. Thus the custom arose, whereby the Chapel of St John Baptist is commonly forbidden to womenfolk. The veils also were retained ever after by the women and girls of Genoa—black for the former, white the latter—when assisting at divine offices and when out and about the city. In later times the matrons' black gave way to a spotted net or linen veil, to which the simple name "*Pezzotto*" was assigned.

The Chapel of San Giovanni Battista, within the great Cathedral of San Lorenzo, to which the ashes of the saint were translated in 1324, was built and decorated by two devout Genoese citizens, members of a noble house—Niccolo and Oberto Campanari. A notice was put up upon the grille forbidding "any woman whether lay or religious to enter the Chapel on pain of the major excommunication." In recognition, however, of the fervour and munificence of the founders, women of the Campanari family were expressly exempt from this ordinance. Such ladies were privileged further, for a Papal "Bull" directed that, in the Chapel of San Giovanni Battista, their nuptial masses should be celebrated, moreover the privilege was extended,

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for when the last male of the Campanari family died, and the sole surviving female married a Passano, to this family was allocated the Campanari indulgence, and so it is to-day. It was a daughter of this pious family who became the leader of the Women's Crusade, and gained the approbation of the Pontiff—the Popes were always foremost in rewarding the good works of their adherents.

As for the "*Sacro Catino*" it became the object of a special devotion. Enshrined behind the High Altar of San Lorenzo, a suite of attendants was appointed for its safe custody and constant veneration. Twelve knights styled "*Clavigeri*"—"Keepers of the Key"—of the reliquary, wherein the holy dish was placed, were responsible month by month for the security of the tabernacle. To each *Clavigere* was attached twelve women of good fame in the city, and twelve holy nuns, to act as watchers whenever the precious vessel was exposed for the veneration of the faithful. Originally the "*Sacro Catino*" was believed to have been a unique emerald, and, in 1476, an ordinance was promulgated by the Archbishop, whereby punishment of death was decreed against all and sundry who should "touch it with gold, stones, coral, or any other substance." In 1809 Buonaparte took it to Paris, and during its return to Genoa, in 1815, it was broken, and then it was dis-

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covered to be, not of emerald, but of an unusual and costly form of glass, of untold antiquity. There is one very extraordinary property possessed by this wonderful dish—its powers of prismatic illumination, for should a sudden strong ray of light burst upon it, then a sparkling radiance, like crystal water rippling over green seaweed and pink coral-rock, pervades the sacred edifice.

The Crusaders of 1137, 1174, 1193, 1198 and 1204 all made Genoa their rendezvous : along her strand walked in regal and martial array Conrad with Louis VII., Richard Cœur de Lion with Philip Augustus, and Frederic Barbarossa. All of them worshipped in the Genoese churches, all flirted with the gentle ladies of the port, and all made fair promises, but failed in performance ! Of the latter monarch a weird tradition still lingers among the hillside peasants of the Apennines. “Barbarossa,” it avers, “is not dead, but sleeps in a mountain cave, overlooking Genoa. He is clad in bronze armour, his elbows rest upon a natural stone table, around which his beard, all red, has grown nine times and more. Shepherds unwarily entering that cavern mouth hear a startling voice which asks, ‘Do the ravens still circle round Saint Siro’s?’ The stammered ‘yes’ of the yokel gains another utterance from the sleepy monarch : ‘Then I will slumber still.’” The mention of “ravens” brings to mind another

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story. Such dark-hued birds made their nests unmolested in the roof of the old Cathedral Church of San Siro, and were regarded as mascots of the city's security. Saint Sirius, when a boy, it is said, coming home one day from school, found his favourite raven dead, and with a breath restored it to life. Hence the reverent regard of all Genoese at the present day for this friendly feathered fowl.

Genoa profited greatly commercially by each Crusade, she also gained enormously in her possession of saintly relics. Every pilgrim to Palestine sought, begged or stole, bones and clothes and other properties of Christian martyrs in Palestine. Guistiniani in his "Annali" tells of one Gaspare Spinola, who brought home to Genoa a rich collection of human bones, but these, the chronicler states, had been stolen from Venetian territory, after the victory of Chioggia. In the collection was the head of Saint Lawrence, an arm of Saint George, and the head, hand, arm and leg of a Holy Innocent. The remains of Saints Sirius, Romulus and Felix, early bishops of the see, lie under the high altar of San Lorenzo. There is still another very precious relic in the treasury of San Lorenzo—a fragment of the Holy Cross of Christ. It is preserved in an ancient and curious silver casket of Byzantine workmanship, made originally by one Ciriacus, a priest. This considerable treasure came into

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the possession of the chapter of the cathedral in 1304. The Venetians, who, under the venerable and heroic Doge Arrigo Dandolo, carried off the honours of the Crusade of that year—the sixth—had seized the relic at a monastery near Ephesus, along with much valuable loot. Ansaldo Zaccaria was sent out with two Genoese galleys to intercept the Venetian treasure vessels, one of which was on its way, with the relic and a Venetian mission aboard, to the shores of Italy, to lay it at the feet of Pope Innocent III. The prowess of the Genoese overmastered their opponents, and Ansaldo Zaccaria sailed into the harbour of Genoa with his prizes. Prisoners and munitions of war were handed over to the naval authorities, but the precious relic was assigned to the victorious commander, on condition that he placed it in a costly chest within the cathedral treasury. The splendid-jewelled reliquary, where still reposes that “ Piece of the True Cross,” is consequently not only an offering to the Deity but the memorial of a noble family.

The name of the Zaccari does not appear in the “ *Libro d'Oro* ” of the first twenty-eight “ *Alberghi*,” but they were eminent in the city as wealthy merchants, owning concessions in Levantine ports. Probably the mothers of the Zaccari were viragoes like their lords and masters. Warlike vigour as well as commercial energy ran in their veins and hardened their



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muscles. It was the clever strategy, under his chief, Oberto Doria, of Admiral Ansaldo's grandson, Benedetto, that turned what threatened to be a defeat into a notable victory at Meloria 1284. Never had so many prisoners been interned in Genoa—among them was Marco Polo, the famous explorer, who, alas! languished for many years in a dungeon, but wrote there his memorable "Travels." It was a common saying in Liguria: "If you want to see the Pisans you must go to Genoa!"

. . . . .

Two Crusades were unique in their way, and, for Genoa and the Genoese, quite remarkable: in 1212 "The Crusade of the Twenty Thousand Children"—in 1501, the "Crusade of the Women of Genoa." Late in the autumn of the former year news circled through Genoa that a mighty host was sweeping over the mountains, and making for the sea. Consternation seized everybody's mind, and hamlets, villages and the great city herself set about hastily erecting defences, for everyone feared rapine and destruction. Alarm, however, speedily gave way to compassion when the peasants of the hills reported that the invaders were peaceful pilgrims, and were moreover children and young people. They had heard their songs and hymns and litanies to Saint Mary and the saints, sung by strong young Teuton throats.

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The pilgrimage was from the romantic Rhenish land and gathered strength as it travelled south. Led by a seventeen-year-old lad, Niklaus of Cologne, the few thousand children who followed him along the river bank were joined beyond Bonn by young people of every village and town through which they marched. Bearing aloft a white banner crossed with red, the young commander's incessant cry was "Excelsior"; he never dreamed but of the success with which he was to meet—the enthusiasm of the movement hailed him on. The fatigues and dangers of the march thinned considerably the ranks of the youthful army, and the storms and terrors of the Alps changed their buoyancy to despair. Still, on and on the survivors tramped—the most pathetic pilgrimage the world had ever seen. Those who fell by the wayside fell face to Jerusalem, and their stark young bodies lay unshrouded in every valley and on every hillside. Still on the army marched—the irrepressible pluck of youth scorning every obstacle—and ten thousand lads and lassies, or rather more, poured through the Vale of Polcevera and came in sight of Genoa and her gulf. They had heard the story of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, and believed in the prevalent tradition of the time, that the Mediterranean would dry up as their feet touched the shores of Liguria, and offer them a straight path to Palestine.

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With shouts of childish joy, the weary, dusty, thirsty pilgrims rushed along *salita* and street, until they flung themselves exhausted upon the soft, sandy beach. Oh ! how mothers' hearts in Genoa went out to those courageous youngsters. Oh ! how every Genoese lad and maiden ran, brotherlike and sisterlike, to aid and cheer their dauntless young visitors. The whole city was exercised in deeds of kindly ministration, and seven thousand were housed and cared for that day, before the autumn sun had crimsoned the western sky. The morrow bore in upon the city fathers the magnitude of their responsibility—they could not send the children back to Germany, they would not let them proceed to Palestine, but they could not definitely maintain such a hungry hearty army. Seven thousand little pilgrims clamoured for transport, seeing that the ocean was not to be dry land ; these were refused, and Niklaus, with the more robust of his boy comrades embarked for Marseilles, hoping there to obtain shipping for Palestine. Of the rest some were rescued, by broken-hearted parents from the north, but the greater part became merged in the city population—foster-children of the good citizens of Genoa. The absorption of so many vigorous young people into the domestic life was a matter of congratulation, for had not a valuable asset in the economics of health and productive-

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ness been added to the development of the republic.

The other Crusade, to which allusion has been made, was, from the point of view of the “ Heroines of Genoa,” a very much more interesting episode in those stirring times. The “ *Crociata delle Donne* ” was the natural outcome of two centuries of Christian fervency and military ardour. Heroes and heroines live and die together—one the complement of the other. Napoleon Buonaparte pointed the moral of militariness when he exclaimed : “ Give me mothers, and then I can drill their sons ! ” Yes, the mothering of a nation is of vital importance. Genoese women and girls, thrown into close personal contact with vigorous men-at-arms and bold adventurers from every European state, were bound to exhibit the attributes they acquired by that intimacy.

Whilst strict codes of morals, as we now superficially regard them, were absolutely unknown and undesired in Liguria, the mating of strong and healthy men with women of inferior physique and opportunity exercised to immense influence upon subsequent generations of Genoese. The love-child of a girl of Genoa, whether lad or maid, inherited the characteristics of its putative father, though probably very few set eyes upon their offspring, and the child boasted of its parents’ heroism and lived to reproduce the



A CITIZEN'S WIFE WEARING  
A FIGURED PEZZOTTO.

AFTER A WOODCUT, 1617.



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same. The environment of Genoese children was warlike—honours went to the brave—and, whilst only the brave deserve the fair, the fair were as brave and as bold as their lovers !

It was forbidden, by Papal precept and by civil enactment, for women to accompany Crusaders to Palestine, although very many to be sure evaded the prohibition, and, assuming military uniform, took their places beside their lords and sweethearts. The sense of female disabilities preyed constantly upon the younger and more venturesome women of Liguria, and efforts were constantly made to equalise the sexes. If they furnished “saddles” for the men they meant as well to put bridles between their teeth ! The Crusades acted as spurs to feminine ambitions, and every woman who had leisure sought to perfect herself in manly and martial exercises. Among Italians the Ligurian woman, above all others, was regarded as the equal of a man, in physical strength and endurance.

“ Su i lidi tuoi Regal Città di Giano  
Scendon le tre divine alme sorelle  
Tanto dal Greco secolo lontano  
Chiare per Fedia e pel famoso Apelle.” <sup>1</sup>

So sang Carlo Innocenzo Frugoni, born in Genoa,

<sup>1</sup> “ Away in Greek times a long while ago,  
Three beauteous maidens, sisters divine,  
Came tripping thy shores, Regal Giano,  
Awaiting Apelles a queen to design.”

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in 1692 : he died poet laureate at Parma in 1768. He had wit and he had imagination, and he goes on, in his sonnet, to sing, not of Venus of the Venetians nor of Juno of the Florentines, but of Diana of the Genoese—the huntress of the Gods, huntress, if you will, of men !—Queen of the “ Devils ” of adolescent Prince Cupid !

The question the Genoese suffragettes of the end of the thirteenth century put to themselves and to the men of their city was, “ Why should not we women have a Crusade of Women ? ” This query was doubtless provoked by the lukewarmness of Genoa’s menfolk in the matter of the Crusades. They were quite willing, even anxious, to act as universal carriers and purveyors to Jerusalem ; it meant rich fees and emoluments ; but to take up the Cross themselves was not only unprofitable financially, but it imperilled their hold upon the good things of the world. The sordid spirit of indifference is a curse to any country upon which it falls, besides it provokes women to be up and doing what men ignore, postpone or prostitute. “ O misery of man,” once exclaimed Leonardi da Vinci, “ to how many things do you make yourselves slaves for money ! ”

Early in the year 1300 a number of Genoese noble ladies formed themselves into a council for the immediate realisation of the women’s dream. At the head was Madonna Marietta Grimaldi, daughter of the Lord of Passano and



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wife of Messir Borgoguoni Grimaldi. As Admiral of the Genoese Fleet, which meted out retributive justice to the Catalonians, who had for years ravaged Genoese territory, he gained rich laurels. He died in 1306, and he was buried under a splendid monument, erected by the republic, in the ancient Church of San Domingo, where also Madonna Marietta was laid for her burial. The object the women put before them was the rescuing of the Holy Places which had once more fallen into the hands of the Turks, and for whose deliverance apparently no effort was on foot in any Christian state.

Among the archives of the city, preserved at the Palazzo Reale, are three "Bulls" of Pope Boniface VII. in the form of "Letters." The first is addressed to "Our beloved Daughters in Christ the noble women, M. Grimaldi, A. Carmendino, J. de Ghifulphus, C. Franchi, A. Doria, S. Spinola, S. Cibo, C. Cibo, P. Cari, and other ladies and women of Genoa." The tenor of the document is as follows :—

"We have been informed by your letters and by those of our dear Sons, the noble Bernardo Zaccaria, Giacomo Lomelleni, Lanfranco Tartari, and Giovanni Bianchi of the city of Genoa, and by the account given us by our dear son Frate Filippo of Savona, Reader of the Order of Minorites, that you and a great number of other women of Genoa, animated and inspired

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by the Holy Ghost, have resolved to follow the example of Calamus the Great, Emperor of Tartary, who although a Pagan has entered the kingdom of Jerusalem with a vast army to drive out of the Holy Land the Sultan of Babylon. . . . Your desire, my dear Daughters, is so much more to be commended because the most powerful Christian Princes and those most skilled in military affairs neglect to succour the said Holy Land, and seem to have shut their ears to the cries of the Christians who have been banished out of it. . . . The resolution you have taken to assist with your fortunes, and to go in person to their relief, sufficiently shows that you have a masculine spirit within the feeble body of your sex. We understand that there are some among you who, being animated with that heroic courage have formed a noble design, and are even now disposing yourselves for immediate embarkment to cross the seas, have purified your bodies that they may be made like unto the glorious Body of Christ according to the power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. . . . Approving you then in the Lord and commending, as you deserve, the devout charity and holy resolution you have taken, we hereby grant, according to our Powers, all those things which you have demanded for the facilitating of your designs, in the manner we think most convenient. . . . We trust God will increase the

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number of your Company, and afford such other means that the said Holy Land may be regained and the Catholic Religion restored. . . .

“Given at Anagnia (in the Campagna of Rome), August 9th in the seventh year of Our Pontificate—1301.”

The second “Bull,” or Letter, is addressed to Messir Porchetto Spinola, Administrator-General of the Church in Genoa. His Holiness therein commends the courage and devotion of the women of Genoa, and recommends to his dear son’s prudence the convening of a meeting of the clergy of Genoa to lay before them the design of the ladies and apprise them of the Pontifical approval.

The third “Bull,” or Letter, is addressed to the worthy nobles, Bernardo Zaccaria, Giacomo Lomellini, Lanfranco Tartari, and Giovanni Bianchi, citizens of Genoa, commending the women and appointing them to conduct the expedition. The Pope further directs Bernardo Zaccaria, with one noble companion, to visit Rome that His Holiness may confer with them before they join the vessels carrying the heroic Crusaders.

In the first and third “Bull” the Bernardo Zaccaria named was a son of the hero of 1284; he was protonotary of the Roman See and a personal friend of the Pope. Probably his close association, as a Guelf of the Guelfs, with the

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ecclesiastical family of Fieschi had brought him under Papal notice, at any rate he was an "*Occulis Papæ*" in Genoa and apparently a man of peace and domesticated. Giacomo Lomellini was a scion of one of the great "*Alberghi*" and probably a grandson of Ginevra Lomellini, the heroine of Boccaccio's romance. The Lomellini were of Teuton origin and Counts of the Empire, but, emigrating to Lombardy early in the tenth century, they acquired lands and vassals in the wide vale of Lomellina, west of Pavia. They became Lords of Mede, Langesco (Garlasco), Gambarana (Gambala), Rovescala and Valeggio. Entering into the busy arena of Genoese commercial politics they early acquired influence in the civil life of the city, and, whilst they professed themselves allies of the Papal Party, they kept aloof from family feuds, and not infrequently held the balance of parties when the Doria and Spinola were arrayed against the Fieschi and Grimaldi. Of Lanfranco Tartari and Giovanni Bianchi, and of their families, little has been recorded, they were not among the original twenty-eight "*Alberghi*," but were doubtless Guelfs and trusty councillors of Rome—ever tactful and far-seeing.

In the second "Bull," Porchetto Spinola is named as Administrator-General of the Archdiocese of Genoa. It is not a little interesting to find a Spinola on the side of the Pope. Prob-

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ably this unusual circumstance may be set down to the fact that, for a few years, 1290-1306, the Doria and Spinola were rivals for precedence in Genoa. The Fieschi and Grimaldi fomented the quarrel and made overtures to both families, and the Spinola, accepting their intercession, became virtual masters of Genoa, and for political reasons they effected a truce with Rome. The choice then of Porchetto Spinola by the Pope, not only as Administrator of the Archdiocese, but as a trusty councillor in the delicate situation created by the Women of Genoa in relation to the Crusades, was a master stroke, such as the Vatican has played time out of mind with eminent success.

The story of the "*Crociata delle Donne*" is soon completed. Bernardo Zaccaria's visit to Pope Boniface resulted in the issue of a Papal Letter addressed to the nine noble Genoese women, and the other ladies acting with them, accepting their offer of service but directing them to transfer their military ardour with as much enthusiasm to conduct more consistent with the powers and uses of their sex. His Holiness requests them "not to expose yourselves to dangers which the most vigorous men could scarcely endure, but to be satisfied with defraying the cost of the armament of an expedition of male Genoese Crusaders, and furthering the complete maintenance in Genoa of hospitals, refuges,

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and sanatoria for warriors and pilgrims returned invalided from Palestine.”

The wise advice of Rome was cordially accepted by the magistrates in Genoa : it did but support their own efforts in checking an unnatural and unfeminine movement. Thus, fortified by the voice of Peter, the Lords and Masters of Genoa placed an emphatic embargo upon every object connected with the exploit. Some pieces of armour, still exposed in the Dogal Palace, are said to be relics of the Women’s Crusade ; and certainly they confirm the story of those courageous matrons and maidens. The helmets are much lighter in weight and more elegant in workmanship than any made for manly heads, whilst the cuirasses are shaped anatomically to the feminine bust. There was a quaint saying in Genoa : “ A halbert becometh a woman’s hand no better than a distaff doth a man’s.”

## CHAPTER II

### CRUSADES AND CRAFTS

#### I

CRUSADES and Crafts ! If, as it has been said, “ The blood of the Martyrs was the bloom of the Churches ”—so it may quite as truly be asserted—the wounds of the Crusades were the wombs of the Guilds. This revival of the Roman “ *Scholæ* ” and “ *Collegia* ” bore different names : at Florence, “ *Arti*,” at Venice “ *Fragili*,” and at Genoa, ultimately, “ *Cassacie*.” To be sure, Genoa was not one of the eight industrial centres scheduled by the Emperor Lothair’s “ *Constitutiones Olænsis*,” in 825. She was actually the Port of Europe, and only incidentally a manufacturing city. The Crusades made her the workshop of Christendom—the busy arena of the crafts.

The long tramp of soldiers and pilgrims across mountains and plains, and the privations and terrors they encountered on their way to Jerusalem, found them at Genoa, seeking embarkation, ragged and defenceless. Whatever equipment had been effected when they started

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from their distant homes was worn and worthless, and new outfits were needed before departing to Palestine. Whilst huge stocks of raw material of all kinds filled the spacious Genoese warehouses, the supply of manufactured articles fell very far below the demand. Necessity, the ever-fruitful mother of invention, established a new nursery in Genoa : stevedores and shippers turned their hands to weaving and hammering, dockers and porters to shoe-making and carving. The women, too, of the port set to work to spin, and sew, and embroider, and in delicate handicrafts to supplement the labours of the men. There was no question of unemployment under the ægis of the Red Cross, and the blue robe of Mary, “ Queen of Genoa,” enwrapped no idlers or undesirables.

Looms were set up in every *salita* and *vicolo*, and busy fingers were thrusting hissing shuttles through warps of wool, of silk, of flax, Every *cortile* had its smithy and its armourer’s bench, where strident metallic music awoke the echoes. Tanners and saddlers, expressing pungent odours from vats and trees, turned out gauntlets, boots and scabbards for men, and harness for their chargers. Sailmakers and cordwainers were as fully employed as the shipbuilders and refitters. All along the sandy beach woodmen were shaping shafts for lances and bows : their shavings mingled with cuttings of knights’





LA MARCHESA GERONIMA BRIGNOLE-SALE  
AND HER DAUGHTER MARGHERITA.

Anthony Vandyck.  
PALAZZO ROSSO, GENOVA.



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mantles of velvet and brocade. Every house was a workshop : every church a store. Purveyors of comestibles, and growers of vines, with slaughterers of cattle, and merchants in oil and wax, worked night and day to furnish ships' supplies. Bullocks, mules, asses, and even dogs, were pressed into man's urgent services. Children who were too young to help were left pretty much to themselves in the gutters, but those whose fingers and feet were of any use were apprenticed before they reached their teens. All Genoa hummed ; " work and pay—pay and work," was the tune ; and the result, phenomenal prosperity.

It is perhaps unnecessary here to trace the history of the twenty-one trade corporations, or guilds, which shared the various industries of the city ; but it is interesting to note that the "*Arti*" of Florence and the "*Fragili*" of Venice enrolled respectively the same number of crafts. Genoa, however, like her sister republics, had her peculiar commodities—silk-velvet, jewellery, (filigree), gloves, balconies, galleys, sponges, scarlet lace, coral ornaments, shell cameos, divers confections of fruit and cereals, etc., etc.—which were all within the jurisdiction of the kindred corporations. The title given to the whole body of the Crafts, "*Cassacie*"—"Reliquaries"—is somewhat obscure, but it emphasises the immense influence religion exercised in

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the commercial relations of the workaday lives of the citizens. Each organisation had its own secular laws and offices, but they were, one and all, directly under the patronage of the "*Santissima Madonna*"—"Mary, Queen of Genoa."

The thirty parishes into which the city was divided were the headquarters severally of a particular Craft, and contained the habitations of the craftsmen and craftswomen busied therein. San Giacomo di Carignano, on the extreme east, was occupied by workers in wool, with the noble families of Fieschi and Sauli at their head ; in San Stefano were silk-workers under the Doria and Cattanei ; San Salvatore had the rope and sail makers and purveyors, under the Guarchi and Montaldi ; San Filippo, shipbuilders and butchers under the Lomellini and Fregosi ; Santa Maria delle Vigne, wine and oil merchants under the Spinola and Adorni ; San Siro, goldsmiths under the Grimaldi and Pallavicini ; San Piero de' Banchi was the parish of the fisherfolk and timber-merchants, under the Embriaci, Lascari and Marini, and so on. Each parish had its special monastery, convent, oratory and benevolent institutions. San Stefano, by way of example, had the *Fрати Minori*, a large general hospital, and a foundling asylum, where one hundred Genoese girls were brought up and were taught to work in silk—to each of whom a dowry was given on marriage.

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The names of many of the families of Genoa were connected with, or derived from, their craft or occupation. The Spinola, second only to the Doria in antiquity and influence, gained their cognomen from "*Il Spinola*"—the spigot, or tap of a wine cask. Messir Guido Spinola, one of the first consuls, elected in 1102, farmed land at Carmadino, in the Polcevera Valley, and grew his vines and pressed his grapes, and kept open house to one and all—quite a country gentleman of the olden time. He was the father of Genoese wine merchants. In the Borgo de' Lanajuoli, the quarter of the wool-workers, two brothers lived, early in the twelfth century. Giovanni and Andrea Purpurero. They owned a meadow in the valley of Bisagno, where they washed fleeces, and carded wool for their looms in Genoa, and turned out good sound scarlet cloth, much like the "*panno nobili*," or "noble cloth," of the Calimala Guild of Florence—

Three hundred years later, one Domingo Colombo—or the "shuttle," flying like a pigeon or dove to and fro—lived and worked with his good wife, Susana Fontarossa, and his three growing sons, as wool-staplers, just outside the ancient gate of Saint Andrea, over against the Convento delle Donne Osservanti. The younger boy, Cristoforo, at fourteen, tired of the shuttle—its rattle disturbed his life's dream—and ran away from home to sea. In 1477 he returned

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to offer the fruits of its epoch-making discoveries to the city of his birth, and proudly to emblazon his father's "shuttle" upon his escutcheon of nobility.

Every family had its particular crest or mark, as well as had each of the "*Cassacie*." These symbols almost always took the shape of a cross, variously proportioned, and accompanied by emblems, religious, industrial or personal. Many of these "trade-marks" are to be seen to-day, upon what are characteristic features of the architecture of Genoa, the over-doors and lintels of the palace portals. One such—and very beautiful it is—is the doorway of the Palazzo Doria, in the Piazza San Matteo. It is carved in *pietra dura*, with the acute chisel of Montorsoli, and bears the spindle and spool of the silk industry, with conventional scrolls and foliage.

Up to the time of the Crusades no vehicles were seen in the streets of Genoa—they were all too narrow and too much encumbered with pedestrians and traders. Pack-mules, asses and slaves were the beasts of burden: the only horse was that represented in the statue of St George.

" Che à Zena no era ancora atro cavallo  
Che quello che depento hemo San Zorzio ! "

as ran the vernacular distych. No one rode in Genoa save the superfine and delicate, and

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then they were borne—men in chairs or calashes and women in litters upon the shoulders of coloured servants. The slaves of Genoese masters were not all wiry, working, masculine machines, but every considerable mansion found accommodation for “dark-eyed lively girls torn from Caucasia and taken to Genoa for pleasure in exchange for merchandise.” Greek, Syrian, Persian and Moorish beauties were commercial assets in the Eastern agencies of Genoese merchants. To such “chattels” as these, Christian names were given by their owners; mostly in favour were, Adelaide, Agnese, Anna, Alde, Drude, Giuta, Richelda, Sibilia, Officcia, Bianca, Bruna and Nera, and such names appear in every family history and diary.

Attached to the *Porto Franco*, which came into existence when the Archbishops of Genoa tithed the cargoes of all ships entering and leaving the port, was the “*Compagnia degli Caravani*”—“The Company of the Caravans.” Originally natives of the hilly country above Bergamo, which was the motherland of the stoutest manhood of all Italy—the Bergamesque shepherds are still remarkable for their blend of Hercules and Apollo—these most reliable of all the working population in Genoa furnished a considerable element in the economic life of the city. When Crusaders were sweeping over the mountain passes of the Alps, they gathered

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up in their train the inhabitants of Lombardian valleys—whole villages of men, and women, and children, collected their movable goods and made south. At Genoa they were held up by the sea, and, whilst a few went forward as pilgrims, the greater part settled in the *contado* and in the city, exercising their natural calling of farmers, or throwing themselves into the various occupations of the citizens. Men from the valleys of Brembana and Seriana, in particular, were, on account of their peculiar muscular power, enrolled as ships' porters and dockers. They retained their distinctive dialect, jurisdiction, habits and dress, and soon became noted for their honesty and industry. Early in the fourteenth century they were incorporated as a company or guild, and placed under the authority of the officials of the Banco di San Giorgio. The name "*Caravani*" was given them on account of the patriarchal and nomadic character of their first entry into the life of Genoa. To the "*Caravani*" were allowed certain considerable concessions—they had a monopoly of employment in the *Porto Franco*, and none but those who were born in the villages of Piazzzi and Lugno—respectively in the valleys of Brembana and Seriana—or within the precincts of the *Porto* of Bergamesque parents, were eligible for incorporation. To be sure the number of porters was limited, but vacancies as they



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occurred were filled by co-option of, or sale to, relatives or compatriots. In this manner a distinct colony sprang into existence—a commonwealth of families, an *imperium in imperio*—whose members were remarkable not alone for physical strength, but for consistent industry, prevalent morality and conspicuous religious devotion. Women shared the duties of the men, and, whilst they were essentially good and prudent mothers, they were also regular in their employment as light porters and ships' wives. The "*Caravani*" moreover became bearers of wood and carriers of marble for the erection of the churches and palaces of Genoa; in short, they formed the base rock of the strenuous life of the city. Their connection with the "*Cassacie*" was intimate and interesting.

The origin of the "*Cassacie*" must be sought in that strange movement which stirred all Europe in the early part of the thirteenth century—the "*Flagellanti*." Weird natural phenomena, earthquakes, eclipses, plagues, floods, famines and fires afflicted every land, and recourse was had to religious exercises and bodily disciplines. Fasting, praying, and scourging were alike attractive mitigants of divine wrath. In Genoa the "*Confraternita di Santo Lazzaro*," in 1256, took the lead in public self-abasement; their real work was the search for and segregation of lepers, and the example of

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the brethren influenced the whole population so greatly that men and women ran about the city cutting and waling themselves, till blood flowed from their wounds and bespattered houses and streets. These extraordinary “penitents” assumed a special dress, a long flowing canvas smock dyed blue, and a hood with two openings for the eyes to see through. This habit, it may be interesting to state, is still worn by the brethren of the Genoese “*Misericordia*.”

Twelve distinct Companies of the “*Flagellanti*” were incorporated and each Company built an Oratory, wherein members might assemble daily for public and private discipline and devotion, and for the administration of charity. Each Oratory had its patron saint, its staff of ministers and assistants, and its annual religious festival. To each were attached particular classes of the community—for example, the inhabitants of the parish of Santa Maria di Castello foregathered at the Oratory of San Giacomo della Marina, they were chiefly concerned in the merchandise of poultry, fruit and vegetables, and other country produce. At the Oratory of the “*Disciplinanti della Santa Croce*,” in the parish of San Silvestro, assembled men and women employed in dyeing and scouring cloth and leather. Every family or group of families was *per se* a benefit society and very conservative in principle and action—“Charity begins at

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home ” was a trite Genoese saying. Religion, trade, family and the individual were blended in the social life of Genoa, and the man’s part in life and the woman’s were both clearly defined—much as the old English ballad says :

“ Her father he has locked the door,  
Her mother keeps the key.”

The twelve original Oratories were enlarged to twenty-one, and each became the rallying point of an incorporated Trade Guild. Together with commercial expansion went the growth of political party, and the Oratory became, in addition, the central office of the economical and social entities of the common life. When the time of whipping their sinful bodies had passed away, members of Oratories and Trades chastised their brains and faculties instead, in emulation of one or the other. The several patronal festivals were merged in one general religious pageant, wherein each Oratory, Trade, family and individual strove to outdo another in magnificence and roystering. Four times a year—Epiphany, 1st May, St John Baptist’s Day and the Feast of St Michael and All Angels—splendid processions were organised by each of the twenty-one “*Cassacie*,” which perambulated the parish and the city, each starting from its own Oratory and making for the Cathedral of San Lorenzo. Upon the top of the steps outside were seated the Chancellor of the Chapter and his assistants,

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who arranged the order of precedence of each contingent, its constitution, and its contribution.

Each procession was headed by a gigantic figure of Christ nailed to a cross, but painted realistically as alive, not dead ; the figure was of wood or wax, and composition, and the cross, of silver, was inlaid with tortoiseshell, pearls, coral, amber and precious stones, and hung with garlands of fragrant flowers or fresh evergreens. Each bearer was the champion athlete of his Oratory, for which honour contests were held in every parish, the ultimate victor receiving a wreath of laurel to wear in procession from the hand of the most comely maiden. These perishable awards were replaced, when the streets of Genoa became paved with gold, by elegant fillets of fine filigree work in gold and silver, after the fashion of the costly coronals found in the pyramids and tombs of Egypt. Representatives of the particular Craft or of the parish followed, led by its officers, all wearing silken togas and glittering regalia, with many banners, whence young girls, dressed in white with flowers and garlands, held ribbon streamers of the colours of the "*Cassacie*" or Guild.

Minstrels came next in order playing varieties of instruments and singing popular songs in the vernacular, and be it noted there were almost as many dialects in Genoa as there were "*Cassacie*."

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To these followed a group of one hundred children, the boys dressed in black and gold, the girls in white and silver, who sang hymns to St Mary and St George of Genoa in alternation with the marches and ballads of the minstrels.

Decorated cars—special features of the procession—each drawn by forty stout “*Caravani*,” passed heavily along. Upon each was a “*Cassa*,” or jewelled chest, of silver or other precious metal, or of wood beautifully carved and painted by notable artists, containing some precious relic or treasure of the parish or Oratory. Other cars, similarly drawn, had representations, sculptured and decorated, of Scriptural or ecclesiastical mysteries. These “*Casse*” gave the general name of the procession, of the Oratory, and of the Trade in particular “*Cassacie*.” Clergy and acolytes, in full vestments, with immense candles lighted, and holy water, accompanied each “*Cassa*,” and they bore with them also the processional crosses of their churches, chanting psalms and litanies as they marched in solemn dignity. The procession wound up with hundreds and hundreds of *Professori* or *Penitents*, preserving the designation of the Flagellants of old, but wearing gorgeous robes of cloth-of-gold and brocade with capes of rich silk Genoa velvet, green, crimson, blue and yellow. Each *professore* carried in his hand a silver staff with a chased or chiselled figure of

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the patron-saint on the top. All wore flowers and were shod with brand new scarlet leather buskins. They were attended by dapper pages in beautifully fitting silken hose—sons or nephews, mischievous young monkeys, but well trained to cast and catch flowers by the way. The streets and squares through which the procession passed were spread thick with sweet herbs, fresh or dried, every house was festooned and decorated, every balcony a floral bower, every doorway a leafy arbour. Rich tapestries draped palace front, humbler carpets the *case* of the operatives. Above all was the glorious Ligurian canopy of heaven, divinely blue in summertime—never dully grey in winter. Out at sea was the endless roll of the Mediterranean, the mirror of the skies; upon the golden beach rolled crystal shingles. The bells in all the city *campanili* clanged and chimed in discord or harmony, Each Madonna statue in every church was arrayed in cloth-of-gold with a silver jewelled crown, and before her were placed vases full of fresh flowers. Every altar and shrine was lighted *al giorno* with festal candles, and the sacred edifices were heavy with the perfume of sweetest incense.

If the men bore off the honours of the procession proper, the favours of the day were worn by the womenfolk; they lined the narrow streets, they thronged the steep *salite*, they

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crowded the thresholds, and the windows, and covered the housetops. Every woman and girl was in gala dress, decked with jewellery and flowers, and each discreetly covered, or the reverse, her open bosom with her *pezzoto*, or her *mezzara*, each ready to bend the knee and cross herself as a sacred "*Cassa*" was borne past, and to lift her hand and veil to toss a rose or a kiss, or both, to the man of her choice marching bravely along.

The progress ended in the square before the cathedral, where perhaps the most thrilling episode of the pageant was enacted. The bearers of the huge crucifixes marched to the base of the marble steps, whence they sprang up agilely, before the seats of the dignitaries awaiting them. Each was emulous to out-jump his rivals, and honours and applause went to him who managed, at one bound, to reach the platform. Failure, or want of grace, were greeted with derision. The more proficient bore their burden straight up, turning it every way, as he had done all through the lengthy course of ten strenuous hours. The actual victor received a trophy and a purse of money, whilst the "*Cassacia*" he represented was entitled to premier honours in the hierarchy of the Guilds. The sacred emblems were bestowed inside the cathedral, where they were lavishly embellished with floral offerings by the best girls of the young men, and then, at Vespers,

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they were censed and solemnly blessed by the Archbishop in full pontificals. Evening found the city given over to social enjoyment and good-humoured roystering. Men and maids danced and sang and flirted till long after the curfew had sounded, and only dispersed to home and bed when thoroughly worn out.

The trade of Genoa increased by leaps and bounds, and spread itself all over Europe : merchants and commercial travellers carried the fame of the “ Proud City ” everywhere. Everywhere they met their rivals from Florence, Venice, Pisa and other human hives of industry and enterprise, but, be it said, none outdid the Genoese in financial acumen. The one object of the men of Genoa was to get rich, honestly if they could, but in any case to get rich. They cared little for artistic and literary pre-eminence, for together with their esteem of money went admiration of economy. It was currently held by every man and woman that “ to be respected it was needful to spend not more than a quarter of one’s income ! ” The Adorni had branch houses at Bruges and in Spain ; the Fregosi at Milan, Turin, Vienna and Padua ; the Pessagni, in Portugal ; the Spinola had agencies and banks in Flanders ; the Grimaldi in France and Naples ; the Lomellini had agencies in Paris, Alicante and Tunis, and so on, and many traded direct with England.



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Baretti, a native of Turin—where men affected to look down on Genoa—wrote thus: “In spite of their bad odour (for smartness in bargaining!) I would certainly rather choose to live in Genoa than in any other town I ever saw . . . trade in Genoa is far from being derogatory—nobles engage in it openly and without shame, they are in general affable, polite and very knowing.” Lassel, too, in his “Voyage in Italy,” has quite convincingly painted the portrait of the “Proud City.” “Genoa,” he says, “looked to me like a proud young damsel in a straight-bodied, flowered gown, which makes her look tall and fine, but hinders her from being at her ease, and taking breath comfortably.” Crusade, Cupid and Craft were strenuous forces in Liguria!

## II

The story of Madonna Ginevra Lomellini and the iron-clamped oaken chest is as striking as anything in the whole world's range of romance. It comes as a positive vindication of the chastity and fidelity of the women of Genoa—despite the Pisan grudge—against whose morality of life almost all historians have fallen pruriently foul.

One day, it is said, within the hospitable portals of a commercial travellers' cabaret in busy, gay Lutetia, somewhere about the lucky year of

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1300, there gathered a group of Italian merchants for good cheer and saucy chit-chat. An old German version of the story, printed in 1489, gives the names of some of the merchants: Barnadus of Genay (Genoa), Konradus of Spain (his partner), Joannes of Florenz (Florence), Ambrosius of Placenza (Piacenza), and Bouchard of Mäland (Milan). Amid the flow of wit and the play of platitude, conversation naturally turned, as where men meet men, to women and their ways. Each spokesman quite consciously was moved by the "*Spirito del Campanile*," and boasted bravely over all his fellows of the virtues and the foibles of his spouse, or of his sweetheart. However, a general consensus was reached, for it was unanimously agreed that women were kittle cattle whatever their estate, and no one of them better than her sisters.

One of the gay company called the toast "Wine and Women," and went on to say: "For my part I do not know, I vow, what my wife does with herself when I am away, but as for me I make a rule of enjoying myself with any damsel who pleases me—so here once more to 'Wine and Women.'" Then up spoke Messir Barnaba Lomellini of Genoa, son of Messir Matteo, in the direct line from Vassallo Lomellini, one of the founders of the family, whose date was 1077, and whose name appears in the earliest "*Libro d'Oro*." He was a wealthy agent of his



GINEVRA LOMELLINI  
BEFORE THE SULTAN.

AFTER A WOODCUT.

Boccaccio "Decamerone," G.II, N. IX.



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famous house, dealing in velvets, gloves and Eastern goods—"All I know," quoth he, "is that my wife is not like thine, Sir Merchant, I can trust her implicitly—she is absolutely faithful, indeed if I did not return to her for ten long years, she would all the while be true to me." The men poked each other in the ribs and laughed right heartily at this sally. Then Messir Lomellini, put upon his metal and understanding the covert innuendo, went on to describe the virtuous attributes of his good spouse, in distant Genoa.

"She is," said he, "of a goodly person, plump, still young, full of wit, gentle, and very courteous. In nothing does she fall short of anything pertaining to the office of wife. No Lord, Noble, Knight, or Squire could be better served at bed or table, than am I, nor with more sweetness, modesty, and decorum. In riding she is accomplished and in hunting too: in the gentle arts of hawking and fishing she is an adept. Her book knowledge is considerable, and she can write sonnets when she wills. As for my office-books, she keeps them as no hired clerk can do for accuracy and neatness." . . . His hearers could not keep silence longer, and a loud roar of laughter greeted Messir Lomellini's exordium.

Amongst the company at supper sat a young man from Piacenza who incontinently poked fun at the expense of the ardent husband. Ser

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Ambrogiuolo was unmarried, and he mockingly exclaimed: "Messir Lomellini, I suppose the Emperor has granted thee privileges above all other Genoese. Thou hast thy price as doubtless has Madonna." Lomellini rose indignantly to flout the speaker, and hotly replied: "No Emperor or any other potentate hath done as you say. She is Heaven's special gift to me!"

"I am bound to believe what you say, Messir, but it beats me to understand how a frail creature like a woman can resist the desires and weakness of her sex. I am young in years, I agree, but old in experience of their ways," said Ser Ambrogiuolo.

"Say what you will about me, my friend, but leave my wife alone, I pray," replied the other.

"Oh, most virtuous husband," replied the young man, "all I can say is that, were I to be near thy wife, I know very well that she would grant me the same favours all others have."

The altercation became vehement, and the company, seeing the passion of Messir Lomellini, did nothing else but provoke him to extremities. At length, feeling nettled beyond endurance, the victim rounded on his hecklers, and offered to bet five thousand ducats against a paltry ten that no man but himself could ever enter his wife's bedchamber alone.

"If thou wilt deposit here, with any two of the present company," Ser Ambrogiuolo con-

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tinued, "one thousand ducats, I will do the same, and give me but three months from now to test the virtue of thy wife. I will go to Genoa, and return here with such proofs of thy wife's complaisance as shall surely satisfy thee and this laudable company. Meanwhile thou, Messir Lomellini, wilt give thy bond not to go to Genoa, nor warn thy wife."

The compact was sealed and Ambrogiuolo set off at once for Liguria to gain the wager. Arriving in Genoa, which he knew very well, he made friends with the woman of the house—a poor one not in the merchants' quarter, but just outside the city wall—where he put up. She was a dependant of the Lomellini, a washerwoman, of good report, but ready, as are all women, for any romance that comes their way: to her he broached the object of his visit. She warned him of the difficulty of achieving his end, and all the neighbours confirmed her evidence—for Madonna Ginevra Lomellini was a pattern wife and unapproachable save by stratagem. Together they elaborated a plan whereby the young merchant might enter the lady's chamber. She possessed an old oak chest, it had been her mother's marriage *cassone* when better days shone on the family in the past. This was encircled with iron clamps, and a spring-lock, which could be opened from within, was added. Into it Ser Ambrogiuolo purposed to

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bestow himself, and thus to be carried into Messir Barnaba's house. The woman's wit suggested that she should go and ask Madonna Ginevra Lomellini a personal favour,—namely, that she would permit her to leave in her care, and in her bedchamber for greater security, a chest which, as she said, “contained valuable family property, which I could not trust elsewhere. I am called unexpectedly to go upon a visit into the country, which however will not extend beyond three days.”

Madonna Ginevra at once gladly accepted the charge, and moreover gave the good woman five ducats towards the expenses of her journey. The chest, heavy as it was with its human burden, was deposited in her room at the foot of her bed. Night followed day, and the virtuous madonna, feeling weary and a little sad at her good husband's lengthy absence, knelt before “*Maria Consolata*” and asked protection from all ills and fears. Then slowly undressing she laid herself down peacefully by her young daughter's side, upon the bed, and soon enough slept the sleep of the just. Sounds of heavy slumber presently struck the quick ears of Ambrogiuolo, and with the utmost precaution he raised the lid of the chest and sprang lightly out. Before the sacred picture on the wall still burned the holy taper—never extinguished when Messir Barnaba was away. Quickly he



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surveyed the room, and noted its contents, with the bed and its occupants, whose sweet repose and beauty startled him. Should he awake the sleeper, and seize, with the certain chance of discomfiture, the certain pleasure within his grasp? The tempter was strong within him, but Ambrogiuolo was stronger still. Illicit delight was impossible under the circumstances, but he uncovered the bosom of the madonna, and there beheld a natural mark which none but she bore. This he treasured in his mind. Then laying hands on a silver silken purse, a gilded girdle, and a gemmed ring—a heart in rubies and pearls—he returned to his hiding-place. These were the “proofs” he would deliver to Messir Lomellini, who could not gainsay any longer the unfaithfulness of his spouse.

On the second day at evening the woman of the washtub returned to claim her chest and had it borne back to her modest dwelling. Once there again the bold adventurer emerged, cramped in limb, and needing food and air. Paying his accomplice well, he posted off all haste to France and entered Paris and its cabaret, and surprised the company by his unexpected presence.

“Messir Lomellini,” he cried, “I have won the wager, the five thousand ducats are mine, and here, behold, in exchange, are the proofs you asked for. I hope they satisfy you in every

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way.” He went on to describe what he had noted in Madonna Ginevra’s chamber, and how he had seen Barnaba’s little daughter as well. Then he added : “ Thy wife, Messir Lomellini, hath between her breasts a mark well known to thee, it I have seen also ; art thou now convinced of her complaisance in my suit ? ”

Struck to the heart, Messir Barnaba promptly admitted the truth of Ambrogiuolo’s narrative, accepted the proofs he handed him, and as promptly discharged his indebtedness. “ Gentlemen,” said he, addressing the whole company, “ I admit that Messir Ambrogiuolo has spoken truly ; I am myself strangely deceived, and my faith in women is shattered. Fare you well. I am off at dawn to Genoa.”

On reaching the outskirts of the Ligurian capital the unhappy traveller turned aside to a country house he owned in the Polcevera valley, and despatched one of his servants to demand Madonna Ginevra’s immediate presence. To the menial he added an instruction to slay his mistress in a lonely spot he pointed out, and to bear to him some token of the deed.

Very much surprised at her husband’s unannounced return from France, and still more at his urgent summons, the madonna kissed her little girl a tender and sorrowful farewell, as though she had a presentiment of evil. Arrived at a dark wood, where no one chanced to pass,

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the servant drew his sword, and, approaching his mistress, told her his lord's command, and there and then prepared to put it into execution. Madonna Ginevra's heart accused her of no wrong, so without a scrap of fear she argued with the man, Giovanni, to whom she had always been the kindest of mistresses.

“Why shouldst thou slay me, good Giovanni, when my lord requires only a bloody token of my death? See, canst thou not slay one of those sheep over there, and dip my petticoat in its blood, and bear that with thee to Messir Barnaba? He can't know that it is not my blood, whilst the garment will convince him that thou hast done his behest. I will hie me away at once far off, where none shall know me, and thou canst come to no harm.”

The man yielded to her entreaties, and, taking from him some of his garments, the madonna arrayed herself as a peasant and returned on foot to Genoa alone. There she boarded a vessel bound for the Levant, and concealed herself until it had got well out to sea. Giovanni sought his master's sanctum at the villa, threw at his feet the gory garment, and, in reply to an inquiry about the body, made up a skilful story how that wolves came out of the forest and fell upon the madonna's corpse, and gave it burial within their horrid mouths! Messir Lomellini went to his house in Genoa, but

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save for his little daughter it was no home for him. All Genoa wondered at Madonna Ginevra's disappearance, and still more when her husband gave no clue. Gossip quickly gathered around him and her : neighbours looked askance, and public opinion blamed his cruelty and desertion. The poor misguided man was beside himself, and sought relief by enforced absence from Genoa.

As for Madonna Ginevra, calling herself Sicurano da Finale, the skipper of the ship, a Catalonian, took her into his personal service, being struck with the refinement of her manner and the grace of her figure, but never suspecting her sex. The galley made for Alexandria, and, after discharging cargo, the captain sought an interview with the Sultan to gain a fresh concession. He took with him, as interpreter, his new assistant, who made an immediate impression on the royal mind by the skilful way in which " he " handled the stand of falcons which the skipper offered with his homage. Nothing would satisfy the potentate but the " man " must join his retinue and act as court falconer. Sicurano soon gained promotion and became the Sultan's favourite and chief adviser.

Soon after " his " establishment at court Sicurano was deputed to represent his royal master at the annual fair at Acre in Syria, where foregathered merchants and travellers from all lands, and among them Messiri Lomellini and Ambro-

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giuolo, now friends and companions in commercial pursuits. In the bazaar, husband, wife and deceiver met, but she was not recognised in her Eastern costume. The latter told the Lord Sicurano that he wished to barter certain articles of costly Genoese manufacture, and produced the purse, the girdle and the ring which had been stolen from Madonna Ginevra's chamber. Womanlike, Sicurano kept "his" counsel—he had of course easily recognised the guilty pair—and suggested that, as they were so near Alexandria, they had better return with him, and he would present them to his master. The "man's" good faith was apparent, and they considered that they both might profit heavily by such an introduction.

Gladly the Sultan granted his deputy's request, and there, in open court, courageous, faithful Ginevra related the story of the mysterious loss of her jewels and the compact with Giovanni in the wood, and further accused her husband of hasty judgment. Then she pointed at Ambrogiuolo and denounced him as the undoer of her marital happiness. At the same time she demanded that he should lay down the jewels which he had offered her for sale at Acre. Then, throwing herself at the foot of the throne, she cried out: "My gracious Lord, I am the miserable and unfortunate Ginevra Lomellini, who, for the last six years have wandered over

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the world in man's disguise, being basely aspersed by this villain Ambrogiuolo." Then she unbared her bosom and exposed the mark Ambrogiuolo had seen, and which Barnaba knew so well, and turning to Ambrogiuolo, who stood speechless, she demanded: "When didst thou, thou varlet, lie with me?—thou knowest thou hast lied!"

Meanwhile Messir Barnaba had fallen on the floor beside his wife, weeping bitterly, protesting his sorrow for his haste, and bewailing the hauntings that had followed him for six weary years, and then he told the story of his bet of five thousand ducats with Ambrogiuolo. With this Ginevra raised herself, and laying her hand upon her husband's arm acquitted him of malice, and offered, there and then, her cheek for his embrace. The Sultan's heart was touched—marital fidelity such as this was a marvel indeed to him, and such purity as Ginevra's was an unknown quality, whilst her sufferings had not turned her love to hate. Joining her hand and Barnaba's within his own, he proclaimed them man and wife, and he bade them to be of good courage. He gave them royal entertainment, and despatched them straight home to Genoa in the next galley from his port, laden with costly tokens of royal regard. As for the scheming, mischief-making Ambrogiuolo, he was cast into the common prison at Alexandria, and, report

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had it, he never came thence alive but met his end impaled upon an iron stake—the death wages of his offence.

This pathetic story of Madonna Ginevra Lomellini and the iron-clamped oaken chest has been told by many poets and romancers, but by none better than by Giovanni Boccaccio in the Ninth Tale of his Second Day of the “*Decamerone*.” Boccaccio heard the story and became well acquainted with the Lomellini family during visits to Genoa between 1363–1371.

Our Shakespeare knew his Boccaccio well, and his tragedy of “*Cymbeline*,” written perhaps in 1609, is one of his best. There, under the name of Imogen—“the most perfect and lovely of all his female characters—a pattern of connubial bliss and chastity and of patience and trust under terrible trials”—we have Ginevra Lomellini. Posthumus Leonatus is Messir Barnaba; Jachimo—Ambrogiuolo, and the British king, Cymbeline—the Sultan. The main incidents of the play are the same as those of the romance.

Noffio Bonaguida, a Ligurian poet, in the first half of the fourteenth century composed a charming sonnet which seems to be very applicable to Barnaba and Ginevra Lomellini—perhaps he knew the circumstances of the tragedy :

“ I have no pain, nor am with sighs oppress’d,  
So calm is the benignant influence

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Which prompts the breath of Love to speak to me,  
Of my dear Lady's tenderness and worth,  
' More love than this for her seek not,' he says,  
' Even as she loves thee in wedded thought,  
But honour her in thine heart lovingly,  
For this, on earth, is most bless'd of all joys.' "

### III

Princes and poets came wooing to Genoa all through the fourteenth century ; some with a view to favours from her ladies, some to handle the rich money-bags of her nobles and her citizens. The century which saw the festivals of the "*Cassacie*" attain their greatest splendour saw also the stately receptions of Royal and distinguished visitors. The Regal pageants were opened in 1311, by no less illustrious personages than the Emperor Henry VII. and his consort—the Empress Margaretha. The Imperial Court was making a ceremonial progress to Rome, where the Emperor was to be crowned solemnly by the Pontiff ; and the Imperial couple dismounted one bright October noontide at the Porta San Lazzaro. Such a magnificent cavalcade had never been beheld by the sturdy, stolid Genoese—twenty and four princes and dukes with their suites, and four cardinals, with bishops and mitred abbots galore. Oh, how money-grasping hands turned over and over





THE LOMELLINI FAMILY.

Anthony Vandyck.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH.



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again what coins happened to be in pouch and pocket—pleasurably anticipating the substantial profits that should accrue from the entertainment of such a company. The wits of the members of every Craft were sharpened for the encounter !

The Archbishop and almost all the clergy were present in full vestments, and the great nobles were assembled in their robes of scarlet and yellow Genoa velvet : whilst all around the open space, before the Gate, were estrades filled with the noblewomen of the city. Each dame and damsel vied with her neighbour in the sumptuousness of her attire, and in the opulence of her jewellery. The ample charms of the former were made emphatic, and the more graceful attributes of the latter were enhanced by their bedizenment. The Empress looked in astonishment at the cables of solid gold and the ropes of fine pearls which weighted down their wearers : her Majesty's own costume was, by contrast, simplicity itself—a plain white satin gown with deep sleeves of ermine, rubies in her corsage, and a tasteful aigrette of rubies and feathers in her hair. Under a heavy canopy of cloth-of-gold and crimson brocade the Sovereigns received the homage of the assembled company, and then, supported by Barnaba Doria and Opizzimo Spinola—the wealthiest and most influential of the nobles—they passed in procession to the

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Spinola Palace for the civic entertainment. The Emperor's condescension and the Empress's affability delighted all the people immensely, and when the former bestowed Imperial titles of nobility on the leaders of society, and splendid presents on the ladies, everybody was of a mind that, there and then, Henry should be acclaimed "*Signore di Genova*." To his Majesty was allocated an annual subsidy of sixty thousand marks, with another twenty thousand for the Empress's privy purse.

Genoa now enjoyed a season of unwonted peace and rest, for the rival Houses were content to bask in the smiles of their Imperial Lord and Lady; and, when the Emperor appointed Signore Ugocione di Fasciola, of Arezzo, his vicar the satisfaction reached its fulness. He and his spouse, Signora Alicia, were famed for their good looks and parts: their rare refinement and tactful courtesy exercised a mighty influence upon the manners of Genoese society—vulgarity and middle-classness yielded to their example and constraint. The fashions in dress and at table soon became greatly ameliorated, and the Arezzo-Teuton vogue won every woman's heart. The great nobles too were propitiated by Imperial permission to blazon Imperial eagles upon their family armorial bearings. Alas! this ideal condition of things lasted barely five years, for the august *Signore di Genova* and his

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Imperial consort feel ill of tertiary fever—acquired from the malarial air of the Roman Campania—and died in 1316: both were buried at Pisa—whence came about a supercilious boast of the Genoese: “Genoa bestows robes—Pisa shrouds!”

So pleasant, however, to Genoese pride was the rule of a Sovereign Lord that recourse was had to Robert, King of Sicily, and his arrival at Genoa, with his gracious Queen, and gay court, together with his proclamation as “Sovereign Lord,” kept in leash the bloodhounds of civil war once more threatening to tear and devour the city. The “Truce of Mary” again held sway, but only for one short year, and then, for two decades, Guelfs and Ghibellines were at grips once more with one another, until the Spinola rode in on the top of the crest of carnage, and banished the Doria to Oneglia, the Fieschi to Taggia, and the Grimaldi to Monaco—where they sulked like lions in thir dens. The relics of St John the Baptist were borne in triumph through the city, and peace was proclaimed, followed by the restoration of the expatriated families—but to what a pass was the “Proud City” brought! “Oh! how many,” wrote Gerardo Spinola, in 1321, to Salagio di Negro, “are impoverished by this war! How many young men have left the path of virtue for a career of robbery and shame! How many

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marriages will never be celebrated which would, by their offspring, have filled up the yawning gaps in the population ! How many matrons and maids, previously held in entire respect by the community, have been constrained to fall ! ”

In the train of the Emperor Henry was no less a person than Dante Alighieri, who saw him assume the Iron Crown of Lombardy at Milan on the Feast of the Epiphany in 1311, and accompanied him to Genoa. Most splenetic of men, he scoffed at the complacent greed of the Genoese and sneered at the coarseness of their lives. Their entire want of imagination, their ill taste for literature, and their worldly-mindedness shocked him. What he said of the Doria in the “ *Inferno* ” he thought of nobles and ladies alike :

“ For Branca Doria . . .

Doth all the natural functions of a man,

Eats, drinks, sleeps, wears the finest clothes he can.”

Dante, alas, saw everything in Liguria through jejune glasses, and his moroseness touched his poetry. The women and the girls of Genoa made no appeal to him : indeed, they not a little disgusted him, so unlike in every way his ethereal Beatrice. His idea of love was mystic not carnal—a coarse beauty was, for Dante, an anachronism. So he passed on his way with

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the returning Florentine exiles, but stayed his steps at Sarzana, in Genoese territory, and there spat out his sour distaste :

“ Tra Lerici e Turbia la piu deserta,  
La piu Ruina, e una Scala.” <sup>1</sup>

But jaundiced Dante held a warm hand in his—a lover’s—his, and of women too—and just one year after the great Tuscan poet died sadly at Ravenna a comely youth of eighteen passed through Genoa on his way from Avignon to Bologna, where he was destined to read law—Francesco Petrarca. No one in Genoa knew the lad, nor even when back he sped through her gates, four years later, to enter upon his father’s heritage, and to settle down at Vaucluse in the enjoyment of the poetic and social life he loved. In 1327 he met and loved platonically the fascinating Laura de Noves, and she made him what he has come down to us—an open-hearted fellow with no lofty aims, guiltless of grim manners and ill-bred remarks. In 1340 and 1347 Petrarca was again in Genoa, and she and her women impressed him mightily, and now that he had attained the zenith of his powers he scorned not her gold.

The poet of Avignon made his home with his boyhood’s companion—his comrade, too, at

<sup>1</sup> “ All the way—Lerici to Turbia—  
Is desert—none to praise, and nought to cheer.”

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Bologna, Guido Settimo, Archbishop of Genoa in 1368, and entered into the social life of the city. What appealed to him in the women of Genoa we do not exactly know, for their want of refinement was so unlike the distinction of his Laura, their heavy figures and sensuous features had nothing in common with hers. Perhaps their robust and pushful characters aroused his natural gentleness—for nothing is so influential as the force of contrast. Was it not the keen edge of a barber's razor that inspired Dante's seraphic muse! Petrarch's is the most beautiful mind that has reflected the image of Genoa. Of his Genoese *innamorate* he might have sung as he did of Laura :

“ Green robes, or red, or dark and purple dyed  
Did never yet fair lady so adorn,  
Her hair of ebon or of gold is tied  
In such rich guise as steals away forlorn  
My will.”

A “*Ballata*” of the fourteenth century, but anonymous, seems to voice the platonic love of Petrarch for women in general and his admiration for those of Genoa in particular :

“ Appeared to me a lady passing fair,  
I seemed to know her by her vibrant air,  
And gazing I was hers.  
To worship her I followed where she led,  
And there, alas ! I drew back in dread—  
No longer I was hers.”



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It was said the poet wished to die, if not at Vaucluse, then in Genoa : his end came at Aqua in 1374, but not before he had greeted Geoffrey Chaucer, the Englishman, at Padua.

Chaucer, in 1372-1373 was engaged upon a mission to Domenigo Fregoso, the Doge of Genoa, along with two Genoese merchants settled in London, Giacamo Pronare or Fornari, and Giovanni de Maris, or di Marini, both members of families enrolled among the original twenty-eight "*Alberghi*." The business in hand was the establishment of a Genoese factory in some convenient English port. Petrarch and Chaucer had been introduced to one another at Milan ; in 1368 then they took part in the marriage ceremonies of Lionel, Duke of Clarence and Donna Marianna, daughter of Duke Galeazzo Visconti. The "Story of Griseldis" charmed the English poet—the pattern, as Petrarch made her, of true womanly docility—and thus he gave forth his delight :

“ Her name is Bountie set in a womanheade,  
Sadness and Youthe, and Beautie pridelese,  
And Pleasunce under Governance and Dreade.”

What Chaucer saw of the women of Genoa taught him the same lesson, for on his return to England he wrote his "Legende of Goode Women," the "*Belle Donne di Genova*"—nineteen elect ladies. Thus he sings :

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“ From afar came walking in the meade,  
The God of Love, and in his hand a Queene,  
And she was clad in royal habit green  
A fret of gold she hadde next her hair  
And upon that a white corowne she beare.”

The quartet of poets who visited Genoa to scoff or to approve was complete when Geoffrey Chaucer received, from the hands of Giovanni Boccaccio, in Genoa, a copy of his “Decamerone,” or, as he himself called it, “A Complaint of Venus”—upon it he built the “Canterbury Tales.” Boccaccio da Certaldo—as he liked to call himself—born in 1313, and so the youngest of the four—was in and out of Genoa many a time. Destined for the profession of law, he was placed at Bologna, and, in his student days, spent holidays in the “Proud City”—where “gold was the dust and easy the morality.” Jurisprudence sought to fetter him, but he embraced the freedom of the pen, and happy for all time was it that he did. Travelling hither and thither he gained access to King Robert of Sicily, who welcomed him with Royal honours, and added the favours of his beauteous daughter, Marianna, whom we know only as “Fiammetta”—Boccaccio’s “Flame.” She too knew Genoa, as daughter of her “Lord,” and, with her poet-lover, wondered greatly at the want of grace and lack of culture of the women, and still more at their fine physique and domestic virtues. To,

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and as of, his “Fiammetta,” the poet-novelist sang the dulcet words of the favourite Ligurian ballad :

“ An Angel of the Spheres  
She seems, and I am hers :  
She has much greater grace,  
And shows a fairer face,  
Than other women,—at least to me ! ”

All the same it was no imperious Juno from Florence, nor was it any bewitching Venus from Venice, that bestowed upon the amiable and amorous Giovanni Boccaccio his model heroine. In Genoa he discovered a chaste Diana—a faithful and devoted spouse—and, searcher after truth as well as pleasure, he obtained a perfectly new view of woman's worth. The aphorism—“Virtue is found where Vice was looked for”—became a truism in the person of Messir Barnaba Lomellini's Ginevra. Boccaccio was indeed a free-lover—as are all healthy minded men—he was no hypocrite and he found none such in Genoa. He died, in the exercise of religious duties, at his beloved Certalda, in 1375—eighteen brief months after his friend Petrarch's release. None of those famous visitors received public ovations in Genoa : there were no laurel crowns for literature in Liguria. A poet was disesteemed as a poorish sort of fellow by the phlegmatic usurers of the Banco di San Giorgio : there was no profit in verses or novelettes—such trifles

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pleased the women.—their writers pleased them more. But after all the visits of the renowned quartet had their effects—and very powerful they were—in the following century, when the scoffs, and sighs, and smiles of literary achievement inspired daughters of Genoa with the spirit of Minerva, as well as that of Diana.

The year that Giovanni Boccaccio died saw Genoa reach the high-watermark of her power : the abiding monument of her greatness was the Banco di San Giorgio with its coffer full of good red gold !

## CHAPTER III

### DOGES AND DAUGHTERS

#### I

DOGES and Daughters !—alas, that we cannot insert “Dogaressas.” To be sure the Doges were generally married men, and very often very much married men, but their wives had no such title or precedence as were accorded to the First Ladies of Venice. As wives the Genoese *gentildonne* reigned, so far as their lords and masters allowed them, upon the domestic hearth, but they had no distinction in public life. So little remarkable were they, that even their names have not been recorded, save only those of very few, and about these we know next to nothing.

The Doges themselves were never held in anything like the same estimation as were their High Serenities of Venice, they were hardly more than transitory mayors or governors of the city, although the State arrogated royal honours and claimed sovereign powers in Cyprus, Corsica, Sardinia and Jerusalem. Actually it was a mere accident which gave the Chief Magistrate of Genoa the title of “Doge” : his

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designation had been for centuries, "*Console*," "*Rettore*," *Podestà*," "*Capitano*" or "*Abbate*," whether he belonged to one or other ruling or pushing family, or was a foreigner brought in to divide less sharply the rival claims of party.

On 23rd September 1339 the electors of the Chief Magistrate were assembled within the old Cathedral of San Siro—the Parliament House as well—to choose a new figurehead for the republic, and a great crowd of citizens filled the piazza outside. Suddenly a loud voice was heard in the street asking: "Why don't you end your deliberations, and elect Messir Simone Boccanegra, he is a man of worth and of wise counsels?" The cry was taken up unanimously by the people, but Messir Boccanegra protested his unfitness for so distinguished an office, and diffidently exclaimed: "None of my family have been '*Abbate*,' I pray you choose someone more suitable than me." The populace were insistent and replied: "If you won't be our '*Abbate*' you shall be our '*Signore*'!" Staggered by the demonstration the nobles came into the piazza and tried to restrain the people: this was a very serious position of affairs, for their authority and priority were threatened. The two *Capitani*—Antonio Doria, who afterwards as Captain of the Genoese Crossbowmen in the service of the King of France, fell at Crécy, and Galeotto Spinola, wealthy Opizzimo's son



SANTA-CATERINA DI GENOVA.

(Caterina Fiesca—Adorno).

Frate Bernardo Strozzi.

PALAZZO DURAZZO-PALLAVICINI, GENOVA.





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asked Boccanegra to decline the nomination, seeing that he was no more than an ordinary merchant, and to withdraw peaceably to his office. He again faced the people standing between the *Capitani*. “Do you wish me to act in concert with the noble *Capitani*?” he asked. The reply was prompt and unanimous: “Thou shalt be our *Signore* and our Doge!”—and, without more ado, the astonished Boccanegra was borne shoulder-high, by his admirers, and carried in triumph to his modest *casa*. Three days later he was duly installed as the first Doge of Genoa.

This was certainly a bloodless revolution, and, as such episodes went in Genoa, it was almost unique; but it astounded the nobles, who saw that their pre-eminence would be counterbalanced by an entirely new order of things. The *Cittadini Nobili* very shortly after sprang to the front, and kept their own against all precedents. The successors of Boccanegra—for the most part of the “*Porto Nuovo*” or the “*Porto del Popolo*”—belonged, for two hundred years, mainly to four considerable families—the Adorni, Fregosi, Guarchi and Montaldi, and they were called in ridicule “*Cappelazzi*!”—“Hat Stands!” Very many of them were certainly something more than mere articles of stable civic furniture, they were, rather, disturbers of the public peace.

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Between 1339 and 1779—the last year of the Genoese Republic—one hundred and ninety-eight Doges held office: they were usually elected for a term of two years, and not for life, as in Venice. Until the year 1522 not a single member of any of the four great ruling houses, and very few indeed of the other houses forming the original twenty-eight “*Alberghi*,” accepted the dignity of Doge—they considered it derogatory to do so. The first Spinola, Battista, was elected in 1531—he was the thirty-fifth Doge in order of succession; the first Grimaldo, Cristoforo, in 1536; the first Doria, Giambattista, in 1557; whilst, none of the Fieschi occupied the *Dogado*. From the middle of the sixteenth century up to the fall of the republic, no member of the *Cittadini Nobili* was elected Doge—the “*Porto Vecchio*” reasserted and retained supremacy. These are curious and interesting facts, and they bore with undeniable force upon the conditions of political and social life.

The greatest of all the Doges was the patriot Tommaso Fregoso (1436–1442). He enlarged the harbour of Genoa, cancelled the public debt, fitted out a naval squadron, and founded a hospital—all out of his private income. He had made his pile, and his father's before him, out of naval and military contracts. Moreover he initiated measures for the sanitation of the

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city, which had become the pest-house of Europe. His motto might very well have been :

“ Chi va Piano-va Sano : Chi va Sano-va Lontano,”

for he died in a green old age. He was the first Genoese who by acclamation was freed from the control of the laws, and is regarded by many as the “ Father of the Republic.” Alas, not a word is said about his consort—if such he had—she is not even named ! The Poet-King of Sardinia, Enzo (1225–1272), a natural son of the Emperor Frederic II., wrote, in his prison cell at Bologna—where he pined away for three and twenty years—a *terzo* which seems to fit the character of Doge Tommaso Fregoso :

“ I hold him well advised and fully safe  
Who evermore keeps prudence facing him,  
And lets his life slide with occasion.”

By way of sharp contrast stands out another, Fregosi Doge Paolo, who was also Archbishop of the See : to him must be awarded the cap for downright chicanery and sheer villainy. In 1461 he caused his cousin, Luigi, to be elected Doge—he was Tommaso’s son—but the following year he turned him out and went in himself, relying upon his band of “ *Bravi* ”—cut-throats—who had assisted him in driving the French out of Genoa. The citizens rose *en masse*, ejected the Doge - Archbishop from his palace,

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burnt him in effigy, and restored Luigi. The usurper seized the person of his rival relative and offered him the choice of the hangman's rope or the surrender of the keys of the city—which were always in the keeping of the Doge. Luigi, a man of straw, retired once more, and once more Paolo gained the *Dogado*. His tenure of office was the most discreditable period in all Genoese history. He introduced and maintained a reign of terror—no citizen's life was safe, no woman's honour guarded. Assassination, rape and robbery were rife, until another popular rising compelled the renegade Archbishop-Doge to fly the city. Paolo Fregoso's career was as chequered and as stirring as any in the annals of history. In 1482 he was preconised Cardinal and placed his hand upon the Papal Throne, the following year he was back once more in Genoa as Doge, and there he remained five years—red hat and all—a very “*diabolo ex machina!*” Seven years later he was fighting for the French, his former foes, against his native city, and in 1498 he died in Rome, an exile and a reprobate.

Three other Doges were also Archbishops of Genoa, but as a rule the Doge and the Archbishop were keen rivals, and jealous—of the breaking off of all communications—of one another's precedence. San Lorenzo was, in 1638, the stage upon which was played the first scene of a ridiculous contest between the rivals, which

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assumed the characteristics of melodrama. That year the republic assumed the Crown of Corsica, and the Doge, in honour thereof, demanded that he should occupy a throne on the "Gospel side" of the choir—the position usually taken by the Archbishop. The latter declined to yield, and thenceforward fierce encounters resulted. The officials of the Doge one noontide exchanged the thrones ; the next midnight the attendants of the Archbishop had them back in their original places ! The latter appealed to the Pope—the former stood his ground, and there was enacted a "Comedy of Errors"—the Archbishop, in mitre and cope, forced over to the "Epistle side," whilst the Doge, in crown and mantle, sat grinning at him, from the seat of honour ! This "Battle of the Throne" continued Sunday after Sunday, *festa* after *festa*, for one hundred years and more, until slim Archbishop Saporiti, in 1748, entered the Cathedral at dead of night, with his ministers—when the guardians of the Dogal throne were all asleep—and stealthily the offending seat was borne outside and concealed in a secret cellar. Then the Church had its laugh at the expense of the State !

The inauguration of a Doge, called in 1531 "The Acceptation," was accompanied by considerable ceremony. After his election he was conducted to the cathedral and placed upon the

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ducal seat and a brief service was conducted by the Archbishop. Thence he was escorted by the magistrates and magnates of the city to the palace, where, in the great council-room, he took the oaths of office, and was seated on the presidential chair. A banquet followed, at which representatives of the old nobility and of the new, of the civic worthies, the "*Cassacie*" and of other public bodies, were entertained, and where—for once at least in their secluded lives—the prominent *gentildonne*, of every grade in society, were seated at table with the dignitaries. In 1436 the installation banquet of Doge Tommaso Fregoso numbered more than seven hundred guests—nobles, citizens and ladies—all arrayed in state robes of scarlet silk, green Genoa velvet, and cloth-of-gold; the *gentildonne* were covered with jewels—coral necklaces, girdles and bracelets of massive gold and gemmed; moreover they dispensed with their veils, and looked the whole world boldly in the face! There was no special seat of honour at such banquets for the Doge, nor for his spouse: the senior noble usually presided. The Doge nevertheless had a unique distinction—a very curious and a very pleasant prerogative—he was entitled to kiss on both cheeks each of the bedizened ladies!

This osculatory privilege was, however, a farewell salute, for, during his tenure of the

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*Dogado*, the Doge was secluded with almost monastic strictness. Twice a year he was allowed to assist at public functions—upon the Feasts of Saint John Baptist and Saint George. He was not permitted to receive or to write private letters—his household was under the surveillance of the police, and his hospitalities, charities, and even his recreations, were subject to close observation and correction. The consort of the Doge had no privileges beyond those usual for any other lady, and she was subject to sumptuary laws like the rest. If the couple chanced to have young children, or unmarried sons and daughters, they were kept at the family mansion or sent off to the country villa and tabooed the sacred precincts of the Ducal Palace.

These absurd regulations were wisely enough observed rather in the breach than in the performance, for we have visions of gracious ladies, gorgeously apparelled, presiding at sumptuous entertainments within their husbands' palaces and surrounded with all the circumstance of royalty. Still no "*Dogaressa*" made her Solemn Entry, nor went through her Coronation as at Venice. No one has recorded the costumes usually worn by the consort of a Doge, as such, but the dress of the Doge was strictly guarded—black, unrelieved, in private ; in state, a silken toga, half scarlet, half purple—a long scarlet silk tunic, with open sleeves, scarlet hose, scarlet

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buskins, and a scarlet *berretta* upon his head. He wore no sword or other symbol of office, no gold buttons or gold lace, and there was no Sword of State or Cap of Maintenance in Genoa. To be sure in later times, when the great nobles—already of ducal rank—condescended to play the Doge, pride ruled their hearts, and symbols of sovereignty appeared—a sword-bearer carried a jewelled sword—a crown-bearer a jewelled *berretta*; there was also a jewelled sceptre.

The retirement of a Doge, at the end of his *Dogado*, was a somewhat pathetic function, but relieved with quaint humour. After Mass in the private chapel of the Palace, the Doge, with his back to the throne, made a valedictory speech, and then, accompanied by the senior councillors, he moved towards the door. There he paused whilst the Junior Magistrate, with a bow, inquired: “Your Lordship is going early?”

No reply was vouchsafed, but the bells of the neighbouring *campanili* clanged a dismissal, and the outgoing Chief Magistrate was led to his palace, upon the threshold of which he bowed, and gave his *berretta* and his mantle of state to the attendants, and then disappeared inside—and banged the door! There is an apt Ligurian proverb: “L’Onore v’ha dietro a chilo fugge!” “Honours depart when the door is shut!”



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In the middle of the fifteenth century, and onwards, all public functions were attended by nobles and citizens in purple robes, whilst, from the balconies, matrons clad in all their finery, and maidens in their modesty looked down upon the processionists. Daughters of Genoa—daughters of Eve—alas, that it ever should have been said of them :

“ Le Donne son Sante ei Chiesa,  
Angele in Istrada,  
Diavole in Casa  
Civette alla finestra  
Gazzo alla Porta ! ” <sup>1</sup>

### II

A saintly daughter !—the first and most distinguished of a noble band.

Conte Giacomo Fiesco was Viceroy of Naples and Papal Chamberlain during the first half of the fifteenth century. He was a worthy son of the noble Genoese ruling family, the Fieschi, renowned for his abilities as a statesman and his devotion to the Holy See. He was descended from Roberto Fiesco, brother of Sinibaldo—who

<sup>1</sup> “ Women are Saints in Church,  
Angels in the Street,  
Devils at Home,  
Owls at the Window,  
Magpies at the Door ! ”

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assumed the Chair of Peter, as Innocent IV. He married, in 1440, Donna Francesca, daughter of Sigismondo di Negro, of a house as ancient as his own, and enrolled in the first "*Libro d'Oro*." They were blessed with a numerous family, as was usual in all Genoese domestic circles: their third daughter of seven being christened Caterina—after the patron saint of Alexandria, her natal saint.

Born in 10th July 1447, Caterina was, from age of seven, dedicated to religion; and upon her confirmation she declared that she would eschew marriage and be a "Bride of Christ." Fearing the evil influences which made the vice-regal court a nest of intrigue and liaison, her parents sent the young girl, on her fifteenth birthday, to Genoa, and confided her to the care of their cousin, Giorgio Fiesco, Archbishop of that See. Cupid, quite unknown of course to her virtuous parents, joined the cortege, and, when she reached the "Proud City," and ventured, with her chaperon, to attend Mass at San Lorenzo, one young fellow at all events, probably others too—fell desperately in love with her—Giuliano Adorno.

Son of Doge Antoniotto Adorno, he bore, alas! no good name, for he was known to be a wildish sort of youth, a gambler, and dissolute. The girl's fresh beauty and untarnished innocence appealed irresistibly to him: he knew no such

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maiden in Genoa. To make her his now became his fixed resolve, but how to achieve this was the difficulty. His extravagances and immoralities had turned his father's hand and heart against him : indeed he was without means to pay his way, and he was too much given over to pleasure and idleness to cast a thought to honest work. All in his favour, however, were his good looks, his handsome figure, and his saucy air ; and these stood him in good stead in Cupid's campaign.

Donna Caterina had been brought up in Naples in the strictest school, and she was wholly unversed in the ways of the world. She had never had a lover, and hardly ever a boy-companion except her brothers : of men and their deceits she knew absolutely nothing ; Still, girl-like, she could not shut her eyes to her own personal attractions, nor to the beauties of objects around her. Giuliano made an immediate impression on the guileless girl by his good appearance and his regular attendance at Mass. At last their gaze met, and then all was over—Donna Caterina was in love ! What it meant she really did not exactly know, but she felt that something had wounded her pleasurable, and she knew that Giuliano loved her, so she waited, and watched, and prayed.

The good Archbishop noted a change in the manner of his *protégée*, and the Prioress of the

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*Convento Delle Grazie*, under whose special surveillance she was placed—remarked it too—indeed the child was so entirely unsophisticated that she took no pains to conceal her feelings. They chided her sternly for her dereliction of devotion, they reminded her that she was, as she had herself declared, a “Bride of Christ,” and could have relations with no living man. Respectfully Caterina gave way, and, weeping, turned herself assiduously to her religious exercises. Not so Giuliano—he had marked Caterina for his own, and he took a bold step. He went, like the prodigal son that he was, back to his father’s house, flung himself upon his father’s compassion, and entreated him, once and for all, to relent, to pardon, and assist him in making a worthy marriage and settling down, and then he told him all about Donna Caterina Fiesca. Doge Antoniotto could not resist his son’s appeal, especially as his *innamorata* was a Fiesca, into the good graces of whose family he and his house had often sought to enter, and thus considerably to enhance the prestige and fortune of his own. His Excellency sought his ecclesiastical rival, the Archbishop—the two dignitaries were generally at loggerheads in Genoa. The two made a bargain—thoroughly typical of their city and her ethics—if Messir Giuliano Adorno would enrol himself a Guelf, and the Doge restrain his Ghibelline propen-

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sities, and would, moreover, pay up all the debts owed by the young scapegrace, the Archbishop promised to arrange the matter with his relatives in Naples, and to make peace for the Adorni with Rome. He would, he said, be pleased to give so choice a daughter of his ancient house in exchange for a devoted ally of Holy Church, and, moreover, he would himself make a contribution to the wedding dowry.

Everything seemed to be in excellent trim, and the bridgeroom-elect was priding himself upon his success and good fortune, when "a bolt fell from the blue"—Donna Caterina point-blank refused to be his bride! The Reverend Prioress had determined not to lose her lovely novice, she had reasoned with her and told her about Giuliano Adorno's evil reputation, that he was dissolute, extravagant, resentful and a thoroughly bad young man. Frightened by the tales she heard, but had no means of disproving, and recalling her resolution before she left her home in Naples, poor young Caterina yielded to the expostulations of the Prioress.

This was not what the Archbishop had looked for: he was greatly displeased, and communicated the unfavourable turn the affair had taken to Conte Giacomo and Contessa Francesca in Naples. Action was at once decided upon, and her father hastened away to Genoa, to press upon his daughter the policy of not losing such

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an eligible husband. His influence, backed by the Archbishop's, weighed heavily upon the girl, and she yielded reluctantly to their pressure, renounced her preliminary vows, and prepared herself for her marriage—feeling all the time very miserable and distraught.

There was a black and white wedding at San Lorenzo's—the bride positively declined to assume the customary crimson velvet robe and lavish ornaments of gold and jewels, and she wore a black *gonella*, with a white Genoese lace veil. To be sure the simplicity of her attire emphasised her loveliness, but Giuliano, though arrayed in gold and blue, and wearing his jauntiest air, felt apprehensive of the future, although the thrall of Cupid commanded his devotion and confidence. It was not “Roses, roses all the way” for the newly married couple: she resented her husband's embraces and he fell foul of her religious scruples. Matters went from bad to worse, and the old devil in the man was not long in reasserting his dominion. Giuliano loved wine and women, and neglected his home and wife. Young and inexperienced in the ways of the world, she ill-brooked the intrusion of other women within the marital chamber, and, for her modesty, she found herself set aside and dishonoured by the man who had promised so bravely but a few months before.

In 1468, after five years of embittered dis-

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enchantment, Madonna Caterina betook herself to the *Convento delle Donne delle Grazie*—the Genoese refuge for unhappy married women, There one of her sisters, unfortunate, like herself, had lately been cloistered, and there she proposed to remain and dedicate her life to the service of suffering and penniless humanity, in works of charity and devotion. Her loving heart, full of true woman's sympathy, went out to every one in distress and shame, and not the least sensitive were its throbs for degraded Giuliano. Again cast off by his indulgent father, his home broken up, and all his resolutions of amendment shattered, the wretched man fell from one abyss of infamy to another, until he was reduced to abject poverty and despair. Then came Madonna Caterina's superhuman opportunity; she sought out her reprobate husband, rescued him, and brought him once more under the influence of a good woman; and, through her, to his rehabilitation by the Church. Under her instruction and patience, Giuliano Adorno turned his back for ever on the world he had so enjoyed and misused, and, taking on himself the vows of a tertiary of the Order of San Francesco d'Assissi, he placed his foot upon the first rung of the heavenly ladder.

Together the reunited pair—joined together no longer in carnal desires but in spiritual affinities—rented a roomy house, close to the

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*Spedale Maggiore* (now Pammatone), under the shadow of the Romanesque Church of San Stefano, in the parish of the Fieschi, where they received and tenderly nursed poor incurables. Madonna Caterina, in 1489, was elected Prioress of the Women's Department of the Hospital, and gathered around her a devoted band of women postulants of the nursing order she founded. Five peaceful, useful years followed, and then death came to the House of Mercy in Via Portorio, and carried away, not the Holy Caterina, but her repentant husband, Giuliano. For him the Ligurian proverb may be quoted: "*La Morte paga i debiti e l'anima li purga*"—"Death pays all debts and the soul is purged."

Caterina, widowed, continued her eleemosynary mission, and also found time to compose and transcribe many helpful tractates and treatises for persons in distress of mind as well as suffering from bodily infirmities. These were marked by great mental ability as well as by Christian simplicity. Frate Antonio Cesare, of the Oratorians of Verona, speaks of these literary labours as: "*Gravissime e sublime opere.*" The most remarkable of these publications was the "*Trattato sul Purgatorio*"—"The Story of Purgatory"—which was published in 1502: it set forth the strength of Christian piety in the face of death. Translated into French and Spanish, Prioress Caterina's "*Purgatorio*" had a great



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vogue, and is still a valuable classic in every Catholic library.

Probably the class of literature which made Madonna Caterina's name most popular was a series of "*Dialoghi*" upon religious questions. They were seized upon by the parochial clergy in Genoa for use in their churches, in Lent, at Confirmation, at First Communion, and at other solemn seasons. They are nearly all cast in the form of a controversy between "Good" and "Evil," and the method of their use was that two of the clergy of a parish assumed the rival *rôles*, and from high wooden pulpits disputed publicly in the naves of their churches. Instructions of this character are conducted at the present day in every church in Genoa, but alas! for the pushful current of changeful ideas the stolidity of the Genoese poorer classes has yielded to a gaiety of irreverence, for, in the wordy contest, every point scored by the representatives of the Evil One is greeted with applause and laughter, whilst the conventional churchy protests of the impersonators of Christ, Saint Mary and the Guardian Angel are taken churlishly!

In 1509 Madonna Caterina felt her end approaching—she was old in graces, if not in years—and on 18th March of that year she made her will, which, besides directing that the whole of her property and possessions should pass to the hospital, gave instructions about her burial.

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She had prepared a sepulchre for herself, beside her husband, in the Church of San Niccolo del Boschetto, upon the beautiful Monte Paradiso beyond the Polcevera, near its embouchement in the Gulf of Genoa. These directions were put on the side by the executors—two priests of the “*Frati Minori*”—for upon her death, 12th September 1510, her body was enclosed in a solid cedar chest and deposited under the altar of the hospital chapel—“in order,” so they said, “that her memory and presence might never be taken away from those to whom she had ministered.”

Thus passed away one of the “Daughters of Genoa”—a saintly daughter—whose memory is still green and fragrant in the religious life of the religious life of the “Proud City.” Her holy example and saintly death were recorded in Papal annals, and no one thought of opposition when, in 1737, a “Bull” was issued beatifying and canonising this saint of Genoa. At the same time her remains, which had almost miraculously undergone very little change, were placed within a superb crystal casket, adorned with golden bronze, enamel and jewels, and then translated ceremoniously to the choir of the little Church of the Nunziata di Portorio. Another translation became necessary in the following century, when that dilapidated sanctuary was removed for the utilitarian and monu-

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mental construction of the grand Via Venti Settembri.

Saint Caterina Fresca-Adorno reposes once more, and till time shall cease, within the chapel of the hospital. Of her a well-known Italian proverb may be quoted: “Vera felicità, senza Dio non si dà.”—“True happiness cannot be, except God gives it.”

### III

“The Star of Genoa!”—the most beautiful woman in the brilliant noontide of the Renaissance!

Who she was, and what she was, we may learn with sweet content, if we but lay ourselves down, metaphorically, upon some soft mossy bank, “where the wild thyme grows,” and allow Titania, Queen of the Fairies, and Puck, her saucy satellite, to pass over our serenely closing eyes the somnolently lovelorn poppy nosegay of the Prince of Love. The sumptuous panorama of that unrivalled era unfolds deliciously before our ecstatic vision—hardly held in leash—and, as the gorgeous pageants of Italia’s cities pass transcendentally along, we are conscious of a soul-moving rivalry for our regard between the three fairest of them all—Florence, Venice and Genoa—rivals in war, rivals in the arts and crafts, rivals in Cupid’s tournament. Gazing

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rapturously upon the captivating scenes, our eyes behold dreams of the fairest women—the loveliest of earth's daughters, and we feel that were we called upon, then and there, to make a final choice and award the golden guerdon, we should encounter almost superhuman difficulties.

Entranced we first behold Juno and her Florentine court, and there we fix unhesitatingly upon the fascinating young bride of the "*Speechio dell' Eleganza*"—"The Mirror of Fashion"—Lorenzo de' Tornaboni :

" Joannae Albitiae, uxori incomparabili,  
Laurentii Tornabonis . . . "

as sympathetic Angelo Poliziano called her in his "Poesie Latine e Greche." Surely Madonna Giovanna of the "Proud Albizzi" is matchless, an efficient example of a duteous daughter, and the supreme standard of the refinement of the Renaissance !

The scene changes, and we are in a gondola gliding through the shadows of the Grand Canal. She who is clinging to her dashing lover is Venus incarnate—the comeliest of all the three "Daughters of Venice," the child of romance, and "*una cosa di Francesco*" : her love strong as death, her end with his a tragedy—Bianca Cappello. To her the Grand Duke sang his sweetest madrigals :



“LA BELLA SIMONETTA”  
E “LE BEL GIULIO.”

(Simonetta Vespuccio and Giuliano de' Medici).

Sandro Botticelli.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



## Doges and Daughters

“ Upon fair Bianca I fix my gaze.  
Dawn of Love and Mirror of the World.”

Of a truth none more lovely and lovable than Giovanna and Bianca can be named by lovers' lips—so whispered their godmothers—Juno and Venus.

“ Genoa the Proud ” has heard the confidences of the goddesses, and lo ! she lifts her stately coronated head, upon those shapely shoulders of her *Riviere*, and points to a girl-wife of sixteen summers, with Marco, her good-looking boy-husband, scion of the world-famous Vespucci—the “ Star of Genoa.” Inflaming *innamorata* of the most comely prince that ever carried off chief honours in the *Giostra*—Giuliano de' Medici—and inspiring model of the most eclectic painter of the world's premier school of art —Sandro Botticelli. To name her our lips pause not—she is “ *La Bella Simonetta* ”—Simonetta of Genoa —Simonetta Cattaneo.

“ O Star ! most brilliant, evermore serene.  
Eclipsing all else of purest light and sheen.”

Thus Lorenzo il Magnifico voiced his muse of her, in “ Selve d'Amore.” Simonetta Januensis Vespuccio, as she is styled on her portrait at Chantilly, was born in the late autumn of 1453, and baptised in January 1454, at the ancient Church of San Torpete, just behind the “ Franco

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Porto.” Her parents were Messir Gaspare Cattaneo Della Volta and Madonna Cattocchia di Messir Marco Spinola—both persons of distinction in Genoese society. The Cattanei were of Lombardo-Teutonic origin, and first settled in Liguria in the valley of the Lemme, whence sprang also the family of Oria Della Volta, the foundress of the House of Doria. They were among the original twenty-eight principal families, or “*Alberghi*,” enrolled in the first “*Libro d’Oro*.” Patents of nobility were granted by the Emperor Henry VII., in 1311, to the senior branch of the Cattanei, under the distinguishing cognomen “Della Volta”—to this branch Simonetta belonged. Knighthood and the coveted ambassadorial degree were attained by many of her forebears in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: Signori Francesco, Domenico, Oberto and Valeriano were famous warriors and statesmen.

On her mother’s side Simonetta was closely connected with the parent house of Spinola. Her ancestors, who appear to have come to Genoa from Milan—offshoots of the princely family of Visconti—settled on the Ligurian littoral early in the twelfth century, and ultimately threw in their lot with the Ghibellines. The noble Palazzo Spinola, in the Via Garibaldi, formerly the historical Strada Nuova—still stands a witness of their importance, affluence,



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and artistic taste, although now given over to the utilitarian purposes of a Communal School. Of the personal history of her parents we know next to nothing, and the life's history of Simonetta is a blank, so far as records go, from her presentation, in 1454, at the baptismal font to her betrothal in 1469. Proofs, however, are not wanting that Madonna Cattocchia had formed early matrimonial projects for her young daughter; for, upon her fifteenth birthday a prospective husband—an eligible and noble Genoese youth, Giacomo degl'Appiani — was introduced at the mansion of the Cattanei.

“ Marriages are made in heaven ” is a truism, and the astute madonna must have experienced something of a shock when the favoured Giacomo proposed, not for Simonetta, but for Giulietta, her younger sister. Disappointment, however, was of brief duration, for the following year there came to Genoa a delectable young fellow, but all unknown to Messir Gaspare Cattaneo and his family—Marco di Piero di Giuliano de Messir Lapo de' Vespucci. Young Marco, just sixteen years of age, was doubtless as well-set-up a lad and as well-mannered as any of the splendid young men of Florence. He was, with his father, on a round of visits of inspection to the various branches of the great Medici Bank in Northern Italy—he was a cousin of the renowned Amerigo, the discoverer and name-

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giver of America. It was the intention of Messir Piero to place his son in the Genoa bank, the director of which was none other than Messir Gaspare Cattaneo.

One day Messir Gaspare came home quite full of two delightful Florentine gentlemen, a father and son, who had been introduced to him at the bank. The former he said was reputed wealthy and of a noble family, and the other, he added, was "as pleasant a young man as he had seen for many a long day." Madonna Cattocchia paid little attention to her husband's chitter-chatter: her opinion of menfolk had been rudely shaken over the Appiano affair, but when Messir Gaspare hinted at a matrimonial alliance she gave greater heed to his story.

"Why not?" he asked, "the Florentine Vespucci are very well connected and our equals in descent and position, moreover Messir Piero is an influential member of the Medici House."

"Well, well," replied the madonna, "invite them in by all means, we have to settle Simonetta, and we can soon judge. What do you say, Simonetta?" The girl was perfectly willing to see the gentlemen from Florence, maybe she was eager to pay Giulietta out for picking up with Giacomo Appiano!"

"Love is ever young" was a trite Genoese phrase, and Cupid was no laggard in Florence either. The day of introduction was fixed and

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Simonetta, with her white *pezzotto* gracefully thrown over her comely head and shoulders, seated herself in the wide iron balcony over the chief entrance to her father's palace, giving on the Piazza San Giorgio, so that she might catch a glimpse of the visitors. It was emphatically love at first sight : she was struck at once by the manly vigour of the boy, so becomingly clad in his tight-fitting crimson Florentine hose, under his jaunty red *berretta*. Young Marco, although quite a man of the world already, had probably hardly given a serious thought to matrimony, but he had not very long to wait after his admission, with his father, within the Cattaneo hospitable postals, before the mischievous little Love-maker was busy shooting at his heart with sharp love arrows. He had never beheld a girl so lovely as Simonetta : her grace of figure, her freedom of manner, and her speaking eyes were acute revelations of feminine fascination, and he fell headlong into the meshes of Cupid's toils. Marco conquered the goodwill of Madonna Cattocchia by his courteous bearing and cultured conversation, whilst the two fathers looked at one another sympathetically—amused and gratified.

Between the two men there was little trouble in coming to terms, the contract of marriage was drafted without delay, and Marco and Simonetta were betrothed—the actual marriage ceremonies

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were merely decorative features of the mutual agreement. Alas! there is no record of the wedding either in Genoa or in Florence; but that the boy and girl were duly made man and wife together is proved by an entry in the "List" required by the "*Catasto*" in Florence for the year 1469-1470, where we read that: "Marco di Piero di Giuliano Vespuccio, of the age of sixteen years, and Simonetta di Messir Gaspare Cattaneo, his wife, also aged sixteen, make the following declaration of their property. . . ." Not a word has been written about the happy dalliance of courtship, no description has been given of the sumptuous marriage feast in Genoa, and nobody has related the story of the homecoming of the young couple to Florence. Well, Marco and Simonetta settled down to the duties of family life—his marriage had modified his commercial career—under the sheltering roof of Messir Piero Vespuccio's town mansion in the Via de' Pucci.

The year of the coming of Simonetta to Florence was a memorable one—Piero de' Medici died in December 1469, and the new year opened with Lorenzo's accession to the Headship of the Republic. Marco Vespuccio, who was of the same age as Giuliano de' Medici, Lorenzo's brother, had been brought up with two Medici brothers: their sisters, Bianca, Nanina and Maria, were his playmates. Hence the girl-

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bride at once entered into the friendliest relations with the first family of Florence. At the Vespuccio-Cattaneo nuptial feast, given by Lorenzo and Domina Clarice at Careggi, the youthful bride and groom were introduced to the most fascinating, the most highly cultured, and the wealthiest people in Florence. Simonetta made an instantaneous conquest of all hearts, and no social gatherings was thereafter complete without her dazzling presence. Domina Lucrezia — Lorenzo's devoted mother — best of judges, noted with admiration the beauty and the grace of the new "Queen of Society" — ever so much more lovely and attractive than her own beautiful daughters — so charmingly enhanced by her becoming Genoese veil.

"Among the Lady Simonetta's excellent gifts," wrote Angelo Poliziano, "is this — she has so sweet and fascinating a manner, that all those who have any familiar acquaintance with her, or to whomsoever she pays the slightest attention, think themselves the sole object of her affection, but no woman really envies her, but all give her unstinted praise. It seems, too, an extraordinary thing that so many men should love her to distraction without exciting jealousy!" The whole world of fashionable cultured Florence acknowledged the "Star of Genoa" as Queen of Beauty — Queen of Fashion. But what a risky eminence was hers — so young,

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so fair, so passionate—to be elevated, with the unexperienced guardianship of a youthful husband, to the highest seats of the mighty! Intrigue and scandal were ever-ready weapons in Florence for mens' and womens' undoings!

If Simonetta Vespuccio exercised a spell over Lorenzo de' Medici and his splendid court how can we express her power over Giuliano—most gallant, most impressionable of lovers! Tall, handsome, active, muscular, he excelled in every knightly exercise; highly educated, possessed of his mother's poetic nature, and sincerely religious, the love of women was still his foremost joy: "La Simonetta" became his "Venus"—he her "Apollo." So Sandro Botticelli discovered when he watched them making love to one another, one sunny May-day, under the apple-trees in Lorenzo's villa orchard at Fiesole. Thenceforward she was the model of his "Primavera," and of all his loveliest painted women! The loves of Giuliano and Simonetta are sweetly told in a charming little panel picture hanging in the National Gallery. It is entitled "Combat between Love and Chastity," but the nude, well-developed youth with dark hair is none other than Giuliano de' Medici and the slim, chastely clad maiden warrior is Simonetta. The painter was Sandro Botticelli, and he has poetically rendered there the whole human philosophy of Plato.

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Alas! trouble—unspeakable and dumfounding—came to Marco Vespuccio in the midst of prosperity and adulation. Somehow or other the fingers of Death fastened upon the delicate constitution of “La Simonetta.” Consumptive, it was stated, from her birth, she became the prey of the ague pestilence, ever and anon prevalent in Florence, and drooped, and died. They moved her, ere the last scene was enacted, to Piombino for sea air and treatment, but all in vain. Medical science, primitive enough in those days, did all that was possible for the precious invalid, but, in the presence of her parents, and Giulietta Appiano, and of course her doting husband, Marco, the “Star of Genoa” was eclipsed—“Heaven gained a constellation but earth was robbed of brightness.” She breathed her last, a lovely child of St Joseph of the Red Carnation—her favourite flower—nipped just when her sweetness was perfuming and purifying all the world around her.

“The blessed soul of Lady Simonetta,” wrote Sforza Bettini, one of Lorenzo de’ Medici’s faithful body-servants, deputed to wait upon the “Star,” “has just passed to Paradise. Her end, it may be said, is another ‘Triumph of Death,’ and, indeed, if you had seen her lying dead, she would have seemed to you, my Lord, no less beautiful and attractive than when she was in life—‘*Requiescat in Pace.*’ ”

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Three devoted men bewailed inconsolably “La Simonetta”—Marco Vespuccio, Giuliano de’ Medici and Sandro Botticelli. Six short years she had reigned “Queen of Hearts” in Florence. By Lorenzo’s command the great bell in the campanile tolled thrice, as for a princess of his house, and the solemn knell must have been wafted by the south wind to Genoa—for the bell of San Torpete answered the dirge of Florence, and all Genoa mourned with her rival Queen for the sweet, angelic, beauteous young life laid low.

“*Morte bella—parca nel tuo bel volto*”—“A lovely death destroys not thy beauty,” was written of “La Simonetta” as, borne upon the shoulders of devoted brethren of the “Misericordia,” her chaste body preserving still its comeliness, was carried through the streets of Florence, watered by tears and vocal with sobs, to her burial in the Vespucci Chapel within the Church of Ognissanti.

“Those glorious eyes of thine of which death most cruel,  
Hath robb’d us—that he alone might their lustre see,  
Have not, in this heart of mine lost fascination,  
Where sorrow and true love are blended and agree.”

This was the refrain of Lorenzo il Magnifico, who spoke thus in his “*Selve d’Amore*,” for Marco Vespuccio, Giuliano de’ Medici and Sandro Botticelli as well as for himself.



# Doges and Daughters

## IV

“ *L'Intendjo d'un Re!* ”—A Royal Sweetheart! —*bellissima et intacta*—a virgin most lovely! Ofher Künholtz, in his “ Des Spinola de Gênes,” wrote: “ Une des plus belles, des plus spirituelles, et des plus amiables femmes de l'Italie ! ”

The year that listened sadly, as the autumn leaves of the valleys and hills around Genoa began to fall and crackle underfoot, to the solemn requiem, in the quiet little chapel of the Spedale Maggiore, for saintly Caterina Fiesca-Adorno, also wept for a human summer-rosebud plucked ere its beauty and aroma had been fully expressed. The devout widow of Giuliano Adorno had nearly reached the full span of human life, as limited by the Psalmist, but the beauteous virgin—the special offering of the city of Genoa to a splendid king, who wooed, or conquered, as you will, Genoa and her *gentildonne*—had but just passed her majority. Age, rank and opportunity are immaterial details in the Triumph of the Black Buffaloes: neither Cupid nor Mars reckons human life by human standards. Donna Tommasina Spinola passed to Paradise on 20th July 1510.

Emperors, kings, dukes and marquises were always knocking at the gates of Genoa: some demanding her keys as conquerors, some as

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lovers her kisses. She welcomed all of them and submitted in the best way she could: very often "on with the new love before she was off with the old!" In 1438 came the most romantic of all her visitors—a king, a soldier, an artist, a musician, a humanist, a statesman and a legislator: the son and husband of two women, as bewitching and as cultured as any princesses of their time, Yolanda d'Aragona and Isabelle de Lorraine—René, King of Anjou, Cyprus, Sicily, Naples and Jerusalem. He had just been set at liberty by the Duke of Bedford, whose prisoner he had been for full twelve months, captured fighting as lieutenant of heroic Jean d'Arc. She, the sainted "Maid of France," accounted, as she once said, "René as good as a regiment of soldiers!" All Europe was resounding with the wonders of her mission, and men and women, foe and friend alike, bowed before her in deepest reverence. Her confidence in René made him a hero too.

Returned to his own dominions he received, first in Anjou, and then in Naples, Rome, Florence and Genoa, such ovations as few heroes have obtained. Women and girls added their hearts' love to the rapturous applause of princes and men. The "Proud City" came not next to "Gay Naples" in her welcome and honours: the chief offering being in each the



ENTRY OF LOUIS XII. OF FRANCE INTO GENOA.

AFTER AN ILLUMINATION.

"Chronique de Jean d'Anton."

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



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erotic prize of biblical Sisera and his captains—"a maiden or two." Alas, the historian has not preserved the Christian names of the young girl—a Doria, a Spinola, a Fiesca, or a Grimaldi—who was Genoa's royal guerdon, but they have recorded the splendours of René's reception. "Every woman, even the poorest, put on a new guise, pure white raiment, in compliment to the Holy Maid's lieutenant, and all wore ornaments of pure gold in token of their love for her and for him their favour. Tournament, dance and song made the city a paradise of joy. . . ."

Sixty years after René's triumph came another king from France to Genoa, Louis XII., not "*un Roi aimant*" but "*un Roi conquérant*." He had just succeeded Charles VIII., under whose rule Genoa had been happy and prosperous, but the cannon which had battered the walls of Milan were promptly upon the march to Liguria.

The city fathers offered only a weak resistance although they caused a *bastillon*, or fort, to be erected on the height of Castellaccio. With the King rode a knight renowned throughout all Europe—*Le Gentile Seigneur Bayart*—"sans peur et sans reproche." He counselled Louis how best to capture the position, and, to him, the King confided the enterprise. The Chevalier, with a party of tried warriors, scaled the height, and took the Genoese in the rear. They fled

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to the city, the gates were closed, and, when the heralds of Louis knocked for admittance, there sallied forth, not a company of stately magistrates with a guard of men-at-arms, but a bevy of *gentildonne* with the city keys.

Louis crushed the republic and departed—leaving as his viceroy Phillipe von Ravenstein, a gentle sort of fellow, and very much affected by feminine blandishments. Under his easy rule the Genoese reasserted their liberties and the fair sex adopted graceful French fashions, in compliment to their amiable Governor; but their *Signore* returned in anger, and the city was decimated by executions and assassinations. The courage of the women and girls alone stopped the holocaust: they besought Louis upon their knees to spare the city and to accept, if he would, their best-loved and their fairest as a peace-offering. Louis retired satisfied with his ravages and rapes: he had entered the city with his visor down and his sword drawn, and crying out: “Proud Genoa, thou liest in the hollow of my hand”—he left her under a shower of carnations from the balconies and with his weapon sheathed.

The dress of the *gentildonne* of Genoa was, at all times, remarkable for its extraordinary richness. When Louis XII visited the city in 1502, this noticeable feature was especially conspicuous. The “*Atti di Storia Patria*” re-

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cords that : “Costumes differed considerably from those worn elsewhere in Italy. Gowns were cut low on the shoulder and bosom, which was lightly covered with point lace or insertion. The skirt was usually short but at ceremonial receptions, velvet trains, lined with silk, were worn. Silk and thread stockings, generally red or white, were tucked, with the well-shaped feet, into dainty shoes, with silk ribbon bows or metal buckles. A large felt hat—in fact, a Spanish *sombrero*—of grey, or buff, or black, was suspended by a ruche of satin from the right shoulder : it was put upon the head only when it rained or to screen the face from the fierce heat of the sun. The hair, after being caught up in short curls under a jewelled coronet, was allowed, in the case of young women, to fall in a graceful avalanche upon the shoulders. A favourite mode was to wear a large single jewel, plainly set, upon the forehead. Massive necklaces of gold with gems of many colours encircled the throat. Ropes of fine pearls—the larger the better—depended over the square-cut corsage, upon which were brooches of pearls and gems set in pure gold filigree. The sleeves of the gown were caught up on the shoulders with bows of ribbon and jewelled buckles : the material used being finely embroidered linen or gemmed lace, which fell below the elbow, and exposed heavy bracelets of gold and

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jewels. The fingers were covered with rings, chiefly of diamonds, rubies, sapphires and emeralds—the favourite stones. A cincture, made entirely of gold links or of fine morocco mounted with gold, with long tassels reaching to the knees, completed the sumptuous toilet.”

In 1507 Louis paid his third and last visit to the “Proud City,” and now the panoply of war gave place to the pageantry of peace; although, to be sure, the magistrates were directed “to clear the topmost storeys of the houses, lest stifled revenge find vent in showers of stones.” The Royal visor was replaced by a Genoese *berretta*, and Louis rode pleasantly along: his eager eyes searching window and balcony for the lovely girls he had fondled five years before. Before one great palace, the Spinola, in the parish of San Siro, over against the Church of San Luca, the King paused, for, there awaiting him, was the special maiden-tribute tendered by the city—the most beautiful girl he had ever seen, just eighteen years of age, resplendent in her modesty and bewitching in her coquetry, his “*intendjo*.”

Donna Tommasina Spinola, born on 15th June 1289, was the daughter of Francesco Spinola, a Marquis of the Empire had he vouchsafed—sincere Guelf that he was—to use the title conferred upon his predecessor by Henry VII. two hundred years before. Father



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of Doge, Battista Spinola, the thirty-fifth in order of succession, he was the head of the most prolific family in Genoa, and, for the matter of that, in all Europe. The Spinola not only were, "as the sand on the seashore for multitude," but they were remarkable for their good looks—no boys were more comely, no girls more lovely. The truth of this has been affirmed by the example of "La Bella Simonetta"—on her mother's side a Spinola—the great cousin-aunt of the fair Tommasina. Tall, lithe, graceful and exquisitely proportioned, with a good deal of the Hispano-Greek about her, the beautiful girl had a perfect face—oval and golden-hued—fresh roses in cheeks, and her ivory-white shoulders covered with a wealth of ebon-brown, wavy, and glossy coils of hair. Her long eyelashes added greatly to the pensive passion of her glance, and her ruddy lips, like a coral Cupid's bow, were formed for nothing but the emphatic embrace of love.

What could a king desire more? She was his and his alone—a dedicated offering to use and enjoy as he liked best. Deftly he caught in his jewelled, gloved hand, fringed with most delicate point lace ruffles, her fragrant bouquet a sheaf of fresh-cut Madonna lilies, no purer nor more sweet than she who threw it—and stuck the shining painted petals in the breast of his gay tunic of blue silk Genoa velvet. Then,

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dismounting from his charger, he swept the light gravel stones of the street with the great white plume, which with a great gold brooch—a Genoese jewel—decked his kingly *berretta*, and, bending graciously over the kneeling figure of the blushing girl, he tenderly raised and affectionately caressed her. The portals of the palace, flung wide open, were decorated with floral garlands as though to welcome the kingly visitor, and without more ado Louis courteously led his “*intendjo*” within—where Henry VII. had been so magnificently received by the great Oppizimo Spinola.

It had been arranged, however, by the Tribunes that the Fieschi should have the honour of receiving the King of France at their fine new palace in the Via Lata, and it was with the utmost satisfaction that Messir Francesco Spinola stole a march so gallantly upon the rival house. Whatever feelings of displeasure and regret he experienced at the oblation of his beloved child had their compensation in the advancement of his family: quite after the Genoese manner—“*Casa mia Vita mia e Onore mia*”—“My house, my Life, and my Honour are before all else.”

The loves of Louis and Tommasina have not been divulged—why should they? No doubt the damsel admired the person and the prowess of her Royal lover and felt elated by his con-

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descension—he was her city's conqueror, was not she his? King Cupid had a busy time in the maiden's heart inviolate: if Louis loved her to distraction, she loved Louis quite as devotedly. Misanthropes sneer miserably at such freaks of fortune; any girl, they say, will yield herself to a princely suitor, whatever his circumstances or hers may be; a throne has an undeniable attraction for womankind, and she will make any sacrifice to mount its dais. Such was vamped of Bianca Cappello in Florence, and such was uttered against a royal princess nearer home not so very long ago. “*Amore non e senza amaro*” — “Love is not without ill-will!”

Alas! the golden dream of love lasted not for long, but Louis's love for Tommasina did not lavish itself in her boudoir and there alone. The King had ceremonial duties to perform in Genoa, as well as *devoirs* in his lady's chamber. Accompanied by a glittering calvacade—the Dukes of Ferrara and Urbino, the Marquesses of Montefeltro and Mantua, and five red-robed cardinals, with a host of French men-at-arms and the suites of all these princes—Louis rode in triumph to the cathedral, to offer thanks for his victories in Northern Italy. In the Piazza de' Banchi one hundred cavaliers of the house of Fieschi, in gala dress, reined up their gaily caparisoned horses and joined the royal escort—

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perhaps this was a picturesque protest against the favours the Spinola had won !

At San Lorenzo six thousand maidens, clad in white, saluted the gallant company—their leader being none other than “La Bella Tommasina.” Each wore a wreath of flowers and bore a palm-branch in her hand, but Tommasina’s were of gold and silver, gifts of the King. They sang sweet songs of Liguria complementary to the solemn strains of Holy Mass. Louis dismounted from his horse and kissed his *innamorata* tenderly, and all the princes bent to her in homage. Then she, hand in hand with Louis, entered the sacred edifice, where, raised upon a throne in front of the high altar, the nobles and magistrates of the city knelt and humbly kissed their *Signore*’s knee, each dignitary feeling perhaps his conscience somewhat salved as he looked upon the fascinating Spinola maiden seated at his liege lord’s side—she was the pledge of their security.

In the suite of Louis was Jean d’Anton, secretary and poet-laureate, and to him the King confided what he wished to be made public of his intimacy with his Genoese “*intendjo*”—and commanded his pen and his loyalty as scribe. This is how it came about that d’Anton wrote his “Récit,” his “Complaincte,” his “Epitaphe,” and his “Regrête” for “La Bella Tommasina.” In the “Epitaphe

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parlant par la bouche de la Défunte," d'Anton tells at length the story of his King's romance, as, in imagination, given to him by Tommasina herself. This is the quaint old French of it :

“ Le noble Roy de France, ayant envie  
De visiter sa Superbe Cité,  
Ou se trouva comme s'il fust cité—  
C'estoit le preux Roy Douziesme Louis ;  
Je le veiz la, l'entendis, et l'oüis,  
Parlai a Luy au mieulx que faire penz  
Et mon regard sur Luy a faicte repenz,  
Si bien que l'Amour me fist toste mettre en queste  
De l'accointer, dont je feiz mon Conqueste,  
Et demandai la Grâce dû bon Prince,  
Qu'il m'octroyai-disant que je la prinsse  
Puis me voulut laisser et retenir  
'L'INTENJO,' sans autre erre tenir.  
Hélas ! J'euz bien ce noble Don proucher  
Car oncques puis ne laissay approucher  
Homme de moy, non certes mon mary,  
Qui maintes fois m'a esté marry ;  
Deux ans au plus, j'ay tousjours maintenue  
Ceste vie, et pour Luy main tenue  
Et eusse faict tant qu'au monde eusse esté  
Et pour Luy seul tout mon cueur excepté.”

Once more the *campanili* bells rang out, for Louis a courteous send-off, but for the citizens their clang was a notable tocsin to rebellion. The fair Tommasina craved a litter or a palfrey whereupon to accompany her Royal lover back to France, but he, who could not refuse her his love, could not grant her petition. Anne

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of Brittany was not the kind of queen to welcome a supplanter, nor the kind of woman to countenance an amour. She was Elizabethan in her jealousy of other women, in her faithlessness to favourites, in her relentless animosities, strong in hate and deadly cruel. So good-byes were kissed and tears were shed at parting, and Louis and Tommasina saw each other no more: he went off to live a life of kingly vigour, she retired to hide hers in pangs of woman's grief.

Three years sped their course and couriers ceased not their journeys between Paris and Genoa. Lovers' whispers and lovers' gifts were interchanged, and then alas! a lying messenger brought to the "Proud City" grave news—perhaps by Royal Command—" *Le Roy est mort.*" This message stabbed Tommasina to the heart—it cut the thread of her life. Shutting herself up in her boudoir she gave herself over to torrents of tears and tempests of sobs: "Hélas est mort le myén Intendjo, accroist de mon estat, support de ma vie, et deffense de mon honneur. Ce qui me oste tenuie de plus inure et me donne vouloir de finir mes jours!"—she sobbed in an agony of despair.

No more than twenty days after she had received the stunning intelligence, beauteous, innocent and broken-hearted Tommasina Spinola breathed her last—dead for the love of

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her King and her lover. The report of her sad end reached Louis in due course. He had indeed been very ill and nigh death's door—hence perhaps the mendacious report—but he was convalescent when the Genoese despatch reached him. D'Anton was still in attendance on his Sovereign, and thus he records how the King received the melancholy news : “ Le Roy, alors en pleine convalescence était dans son Château de Plessis-les-Tours, quand il apprit la fin malheureuse de celle qu'il regardait comme une tendre amie. Une aussi belle âme que celle de Louis XII. ne pourrait qu'en être très péniblement affecté.”

The King himself composed a “ Lament ” for “ La Bella Tommasina ”—“ *Le Regret que faict le Roy pour la mort de son Intendjo.*”

“ Cruelle Mort. . . .

. . . . .  
Pour quoy as tu par cette Entreprise  
Cette Dame au despourveu surprise,  
Et contra elle ta Fureur attachée ?  
Elle n'estoit pas encore tachée  
De Vieillesse, ne de son gris pelage,  
Mais au Printemps de son flourissant âge  
Belle, Bonne, Sage, Riche, et Discrecte.

. . . . .  
Prince, j'ay en son amour en partage,  
Dont elle aura de moy, pour Héritage  
Prière, Adieu, et Oraison segrette  
Je ne luy penz donner aultre suffrage  
Si n'est que icy ce Bras monde et frage  
Tousiours la Plains et Sans Fin de Regrette.”

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Louis also caused a magnificent monument to his “*Intendjo*” to be erected within the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, which bore an elaborate epitaph written by himself—it ended thus :

“ Qui veult sçavoir comment elle se clame,  
Je ne la veulx certes céler à âme :  
THOMMASINE ESPINULLE, sa name ! ”

The Genoese gave the lovely but unfortunate Royal “*intendjo*” a grandiose burial. The whole city mourned her, as they had “*La Bella Simonetta*,” for six whole months, neither matrons nor maids frequented places of public resort, and the latter put off their white *pezzotti* and assumed the nun’s veil of black. Every young man wore marks of mourning and the city fathers donned not their scarlet robes. She was buried with the honours due to a princess : her casket bore upon the purple pall a Royal crown, and requiem masses were sung in every church. Never were the balconies so deserted, no groups gathered at the portals, and the women and the girls of the markets lamented for Tommasina as though she had been their own. She died in the summertide, when flowers were at their prime, and fresh bouquets covered every altar and every shrine for her, mixed with ears of golden autumn grain. The “*Proud City*” bent her head



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in lamentation—she had lost a jewel of her crown.

Louis XII. survived his “ *intendjo* ” five years : he died in 1515, bearing with him to the end the cherished memory of the woman he had loved the most in all the world.

## CHAPTER IV

### PALACES AND PLOTS

#### I

“*Genova la Superba*” was, par excellence, the “City of Palaces.” Her palaces were the *mise en scène* of her affluence, her romance and her tragedy.

In the march of the states of Modern Europe the vanguard was a trio of sister republics—Florence, Venice and Genoa—each madly jealous of each another, each the *ne plus ultra* of human achievement, but each the symbol of vainglory. In each famous city the façades of her palaces preserve the differential characteristics of climate, locality, race and opportunity. A Florentine palace would be quite as much out of place in Venice as a Venetian palace in Genoa. That great genius, Leon Battista Alberti, born in Genoa, in 1405, taught this in his “*De Re Ædificatoria*.” In Florence her palaces exhibit convincingly solidity, boldness and dignity, joined to elegance, simplicity and reserve ; in Venice, lightness, daring and nobility, united to beauty, richness and dis-

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play ; and in Genoa, strength, wilfulness and presumption, allied to charm, secretiveness and accessibility. The upright columns, lintels and storeys are representative of bold manhood : the stone-courses, cornices and traceries, indicative of graceful femininity—together they are like rare textiles, interwoven with the weft of strength and the warp of beauty.

Of the “ Proud City ” we may admit that she did come behind her sisters in some respects, but, in the number and magnificence of her palaces, she easily surpasses them both. Go where you will in Genoa—in street, in square, in lane, upon hillside—there shall you behold palatial buildings, or their remains : some still youthful in appearance, dressed with cosmetics of stucco, paint and gilt, some aged, their facial furrows not freshly chiselled, their crows’ feet of decay untouched. Thus Charles Dickens wrote of Genoa’s palaces : “ How can one ever forget the streets and streets of palaces . . . their endless details . . . the great heavy stone balconies, the doorless vestibules, immense stairways, thick marble pillars, dungeon-like arches, and dreamy, echoing, vaulted chambers—along which the eye wanders again and again and again, as every palatial building is succeeded by another. . . . ”

Alas ! nowadays barely fifty edifices can be classed in the roll of Genoa’s palaces, and of these

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not more than eight and twenty—by weird coincidence the exact number of her original “*Alberghi*”—are maintained in fitting dignity. Many no longer appertain to the ancient families whose names they bear: a new-fangled aristocracy and an alien plutocracy have exploited them. Some have been requisitioned by the civil and military authorities to serve useful and benevolent purposes; some have become banks and homes of commerce; and some have sunk as low as the dirty gutters at their bases—degraded to mean shops, shambles and latrines.

The palaces of Genoa, in their origin, arrogantly align the sandy beach, daring the deep roar of the swelling sea; or they grasp hard hold of the base-rock of the shelving slopes, climb precipices, and cling to rugged bluffs. Igneous granite, crystalline limestone, calcareous spar—*breccia*, *oficale* and *rannochivia*—quarried in and around Genoa, were the *materia* whereupon Alessi, Castello, Lurago, Bianco, Cantone, Falcone, and other architect-collaborators, trained the sharp chisels of intelligent masons and emulative sculptors.

If the exteriors of the palaces are grandiose and eloquent the interiors are by no means unequal partners: they are—like the king’s daughter of the ancient allegory—“all glorious within.” The arrangements are unique, de-



LA MARCHESA PAOLA BRIGNOLE-SALE.

Anthony Vandyck.

PALAZZO ROSSO, GENOA.



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pending upon peculiarities of site. The great portal—spacious and rarely wholly closed—reveals a *cortile*, surrounded on three sides by marble colonnades, whence are entered ranges of service rooms. The side facing the entrance is an architectural *tour de force*: the irregular cliffside or rising ground is concealed by a revetment wall, elaborated with statuary and fountain basins, or rococo rockeries and grottoes. Wide marble staircases rise right and left and conduct to galleries and suites of rooms, intercommunicating, for amusements, social gatherings, feasts and general ostentation. The front gives on stone balconies overlooking the street, beyond are open *loggie* with lofty sculptured screens, for taking the air and greeting friends. At the back are cabinets, boudoirs, and closets for amorous *têtes-a-têtes*, visits of coiffeurs and intimates, and for collections of all kinds. The higher floor has the family apartments, devoted to sleep and *ménage*, with windows to the front, and over all the roof, with its garden and its space for drying washed garments and for other domestic avocations.

From vestibule to garret they were decorated in lavish fashion by the best artists of the time, both native and foreign: ceilings painted by Carlone, Parodi, Cambiaso, Defferraro, Piola, Procaceriano, Tavarone, Scmino and Calvi; walls hung with magnificent tapestries and with

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masterpieces of Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Vandyck, Rubens, Bernardo Strozzi, Castiglione, Gentili and Fiasella ; and statuary and carvings by Montorsoli, Franciavilla, Maragliano, Casella and Grassi. Sumptuous saloons, staircases and galleries, like splendid caskets, were filled with rarest treasures in precious metals, jewels, porcelain, glass, faience, steel, brass, marble and leather, from lands east and west and north and south of Genoa. Each noble owner had his special hobby—at the Lomellini Palace unique corals and peerless pearls were the rage, at the Doria, oriental gold and silver work, at the Spinola, fine armour and embossed leather. The Grimaldi had Moorish rareties from Spain and filigree: the Fieschi, rock-crystals and antiques, and so forth. The pen would need many many dips to tell a hundredth part of all the stories of those opulent collections.

Fancy, however—ever so much more attractive than fact—gently waves her wand as we contemplate the palaces of Genoa, and, unresistingly, we subside upon an Eastern couch, being somewhat overcome with the powerful fragrance of oleanders and gardenias. Then, through the gorgeous chambers sweeps the pageant of the past: bold and seductive figures, mannered with all the secretive ease of passion and intrigue, and habited in the panoply of opulence and pride, salute or ignore one an-



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other as in days long past. The tone of the conversation is loud, perhaps coarse, and the dialects confusing, and there is wanting the polish of Florence and the elegance of Venice. There was probably truth in the Tuscan proverb with respect to lack of breeding in Genoa : “ *La lingua bordella — per sette favella !* ” Banquets are spread, with silver services and gold, for gustatory citizens enriched and ennobled conventionally, but prone to animal passions, sometimes of the basest. Painted cheeks and touzled hair, unbared breasts and shapely arms and feet set off heaviest brocades, green shot with gold, wrought golden girdles and scintillating jewels, betoken *gentildonne* of Genoa—as frail as fair. Oriental are they in their attributes and pastimes, feeders of men’s fevered fancies, chatelaines of his castles, mothers of his children and his slaves, and devotees at shrine and Mass. A panorama, a phantasmagoria, and a pantomime all rolled in one grand spectacle.

Heinrich Heine, in his “ Italian Travel Sketches,” speaks thus of the beautiful Genoese women, whose portraits are seen in the Palazzo Durazzo : “ Nothing,” he says, “ in the world can tinge the soul with such sadness as looking at portraits of beautiful women, who have been dead hundreds of years. Melancholy seizes us at the thought that nothing remains of the origi-

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nals of the pictures, of all those beauties who were so amiable, so coquettish, so witty and so capricious. Of all those May-day heads with their April humours, of all those fair young lives in the Springtide of their existence, nothing remains but the coloured shadows which a painter, dead as long a time as they, has painted in perishable canvas which is fading and falling to pieces with age."

It is quite remarkable that so few stories of grave, gay and sordid scenes and their actors have been made public property. The tone and habit of Genoese society were marked by secrecy. The nobles and citizens, as a rule, cared really very little for art and literature: they spent their time and fortunes in enjoyments of a baser kind. To have a fine-looking, over-dressed wife and mistress, a table weighed down with rich viands and wines, a residence decorated lavishly, a costly hobby, a well-filled purse and a trusty knife made up the horizon of their satisfaction. The *gentildonne*, who sat and languished in those sumptuous palaces, certainly sighed for better things; but their *rôle* was man's pleasure. Their leisure was occupied by skilful handiwork in linen, lace, gold and silver thread and tapestry; much time they gave to dancing and posturing, and to the music of strings and castanets. Every signora had more jewels and gold charms than she could wear: there was no limit to her ward-

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robe, nor any actual check upon the visits of her lovers—so she bore herself towards her husband and her offspring complacently.

One story, at least, of a chequered life shows the noblewoman of Genoa in the *rôle* of unwonted vicissitude. “La Vecchia” was the name given to a “Heroine of Genoa,” who lived the life of a recluse in a small palace in the Via San Matteo, at the close of the fourteenth century. Orietta Doria—a namesake, one of many, of Oria Della Volta—was the wife of Cattaluccio, Prince of Lesbos. The Turks, under Sultan Amurato, suddenly attacked the island, and had not the Princess, by her words and self-sacrifice, put new vigour into the wills of the defenders, victory would have gone to the invaders. It was said that the brave woman took her stand upon a pinnacle of the citadel, and said that she would cast herself down if her men did not rally for the fight! The Prince unhappily died of his wounds, and so great was the carnage that the devoted Orietta vowed to spend the residue of her days in seclusion. She returned to Genoa, where was assigned to her somewhat narrow quarters near San Matteo. Her arrival was a notable event, never before had so many or such bulky packages been unladen in the port, the property of a private individual and a woman. Somehow or other the whole consignment was got into the palace, and then

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wondrous stories began to circulate of the wealth and rare collections of “La Vecchia.”

None but her five nephews had the *entrée*, and they had little notion of the great fortune in store for them upon the death of the old Princess. She lived alone, received no company, spent much time and alms for charitable causes, prayed daily and oft before the parish altar, and made large offerings to the nuns of St Benedict—it was said twenty thousand ducats—and, in her will, ordered her burial in their Campo Santo. She drew a monthly allowance from her deposit in the Banco di San Giorgio, but kept no store of coin or scrip at home. One day in winter “La Vecchia” ceased her visits to San Matteo, and all seemed quiet within the palace—her old domestic had not been seen at market. News reached the nephews and they at once investigated the mystery. Entering the portal all was dark and still, not a sound was heard save the plaintive mewing of her favourite cat ; but the unmistakable odour of death pervaded the vestibule. In her saloon they found “La Vecchia” laid out for burial, and alone. In her cold clenched hand she held a brilliant diamond set in a border of silver filigree of oriental workmanship. This was the stone of which she spoke repeatedly to her nephews : she ascribed to it mysterious powers. “It would,” she said, “render the person who wore it invincible in

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love or war.” Reverently they buried her at the convent and then they quarrelled, of course, over her property. Valuables—chiefly gems and intaglios, matching in quantity fabled stores and troves—were found in Moorish cabinets, in holes in the wall, under tiles of the floor, and in fact everywhere. Embroidered bags—in themselves treasures—were little mines of precious stones : the finest gems were tied in the corners of silk handkerchiefs. In great cedar presses were gorgeous silk robes—unhappily the worse for folds and moth ; rolls and coils of costly oriental silks and tissues ; wrappings of rare furs, and lengths of splendid tapestry. Gold flagons, cups and plateaux, rock-crystal biberons and caskets of amber, ivory, tortoiseshell and gold, and many other precious objects were revealed to the astonished seekers.

One large room was filled with rolls and sheets of manuscripts—illuminated and plain—“ La Vecchia’s ” collection of family archives and annals of Genoa. Her diary was valuable as showing how, from girlhood, she had loved beautiful things and literature. Happily she was spared through all her troublous days to spend the evening of her life in the enjoyment, if selfish and peculiar, of her treasures. She had good reason to guard them secretly, for there were no more nimble fingers than those of Genoese, none more addicted to the exposition

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of the maxim—" *Meum teum* "—in their own favour. What has become of all " La Vecchia's " collection no one knows : probably the greedy nephews dissipated it, for all that Genoa retains is little more than a faint memory of Princess Orietta Doria of Lesbos, and her " Palace of Aladdin."

Of all the palaces of Genoa the one most famous and most characteristic is certainly the *Palazzo del Banco di San Giorgio*. Originally erected in 1260 by Guglielmo Boccanegra—the first Captain of the Republic—it was called *Palazzo del Capitano*. It has served in turn as exchange, warehouse, mint, bank and public pawnshop. The governors held monopolies of trade, owned kingdoms and vast estates, were masters of the State and rulers of her destinies. In the *Sala del Consiglio*, on the upper floor, is a range of thirty-five statues and busts of Genoese worthies, grouped much after the design followed by Franz Hals, the painter of the Rathhuis at Haarlem—in his portraits of members of the Shooting Guilds. The statues in the Palazzo are arranged memorially of grades of liberality : nobles and citizens, who contributed upwards of one hundred thousand ducats to the State funds, are represented seated and most prominent ; those who gave between one hundred and fifty thousand are standing just behind, whilst those who gave less than fifty thousand

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have each nothing but a half-figure bust. Small contributions are commemorated, not by a statue or a bust, but a simple stone inscription. A Doria, for example, endowed a hospital, a Grimaldi brought out the tax on provisions, a Spinola provided dowries for poor girls, and a Fiesco improved the port, and so on—such were their claims. Each worthy wears his toga of estate and *berretta* of honour, and all hold more or less fat money bags and boxes. It is certainly a quaint and unique memorial of personal pride and public gratitude, but it moved Tennyson, our poet laureate, when he wrote in “The Daisy” :

“ We loved that hall, tho’ white and cold,  
Those nich’d shapes of noble mould ;  
A princely people’s awful princes,  
The grave, severe Genoese of old.”

In the business chambers of the bank are still the old desks, pigeonholes, and ballot-boxes with papers, notes and vouchers, placed there five hundred years ago—the Bank of England can only boast of some two hundred years of age and work.

The most imposing palace in Genoa is the Palace Doria-Panfili, near the great railway station. It was built in 1527 by the architect Montorsoli as a pleasure resort for Andrea Doria : it replaced another famous edifice—the Palazzo Fregoso, given by the State to Pietro Fregoso—“ the great ornament and glory of his

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native city," as he was styled—in 1373 in honour of his victories in Cyprus, and thereby hangs a story. The first landing of the Genoese in the island was in the year 1209. A virago, Queen Elisabetta, ruled the Cypriots and both Venice and Genoa wooed her. The former flattered her vanity, and appealed to her people by reason of their courtly manners ; whilst the Genoese were brusque and unpolished. The Queen, who admired men of fine physique and sturdy daring, made no secret of her preference, and she chose Admirale Pietro Gontardo of heroic figure as her paramour.

King Peter II. succeeded his mother, but he was slain, and his heir, Prince Giacomo, with his wife, Carolina, were taken as hostages to Genoa. They were imprisoned at the old castle, where now stands the great lighthouse, and there the Princess gave birth to a son, who was named "Januus," as a compliment to their gaolers. The Doge Niccolo Guarcio and his wife and a stately following went to the castle to congratulate the princely couple, and it was proposed that the Prince should assume the rank of King on condition that Genoese troops occupied the island, and that Genoese civil officials should regulate the government. The royal couple were escorted to the Ducal Palace with every honour, and were speeded on their voyage by the goodwill of all Genoa, but one very hard condition



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was exacted—the infant heir should be kept in Genoa as a hostage for his father's correct conduct. King Giacomo suffered great privations and died broken-hearted, and unhappy Queen Carolina retired to a convent. Prince Januus was taken by the Genoese to Famagasto to fight his own battles against the Venetians and the Turks. At last the Sultan swooped down upon the fated city, bore off the young King a prisoner, and only released him on the payment of a heavy fine. Thenceforward he lived a bandit life, with no authority, the prey of Genoese, Venetian and Turk in turn. The romance of Cyprus—the crown of which kingdom Genoa assumed and gave unto the wearing of the Doges, was thus intimately connected with the Palazzo Fregoso-Doria-Panfili.

Madame de Genlis wrote many charming letters from Genoa, depicting the modes and morals of society. “All the women,” she says, “appear to be happy. They affect the *mode à l'Angloise* in the cut of their dresses, with their long trains sweeping the streets, and great tabliers of muslin, and Persian-looking mantillas, with which they cover their heads, in such a way that one can rarely see their full faces. Some conceal, perhaps, misshapen mouths, some freckles or marks on cheeks, some unaristocratic noses, and so on; this mode I think very piquant. We were yesterday guests of honour

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at a grand reception which they call ‘*Viella delle Quarante*,’ because there are no more than forty noble Genoese families who give, in turn during three days, immediately after Easter, these large assemblies. Adèle, a charming little French child, who is with me, makes fun of the costumes of the Genoese ladies and when she is reproved—because she also criticised the parures of the ladies of Languedoc—says: ‘But, madame, the Genoese ladies are a thousand times more ridiculous, it is perfectly impossible not to be astonished at their coiffures, so flat, so frizzed, and so powdered, and their immense paniers.’ ”

“Genoa,” Madame de Genlis says in another letter, “is a beautiful city, one looks at it with admiration but leaves it without regret, because the tone of society does not attract one. Here the excess of luxury affords no real pleasure, it is all for show, and on the surface, solely to astonish strangers and to arouse the attention of passers-by. At Genoa are many sumptuous palaces, with superb colonnades of marble, and immense galleries of pictures, but the arrangement of the rooms is most inconvenient, one has to mount usually steep staircases, perhaps of seventy or eighty steps, in order to reach the apartments of the family. Upon days of reception the palaces are lighted up with extreme magnificence, for example, I noted one chandelier

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with one hundred and thirty candles. The Genoese nobles are accustomed to receive four times a year at least two hundred guests : the *fêtes* are very brilliant but the refreshments very meagre ! Curiosity tempted me to attend a masked ball, but I saw nothing but what was dull and ill-mannered. The ladies are obliged to dance lightly but monotonously, alternately for half-an-hour, *à l'Angloise* — country dances—and again half-an-hour Genoese popular figures. Then they began all over again. I am persuaded that only the French know how to amuse themselves."

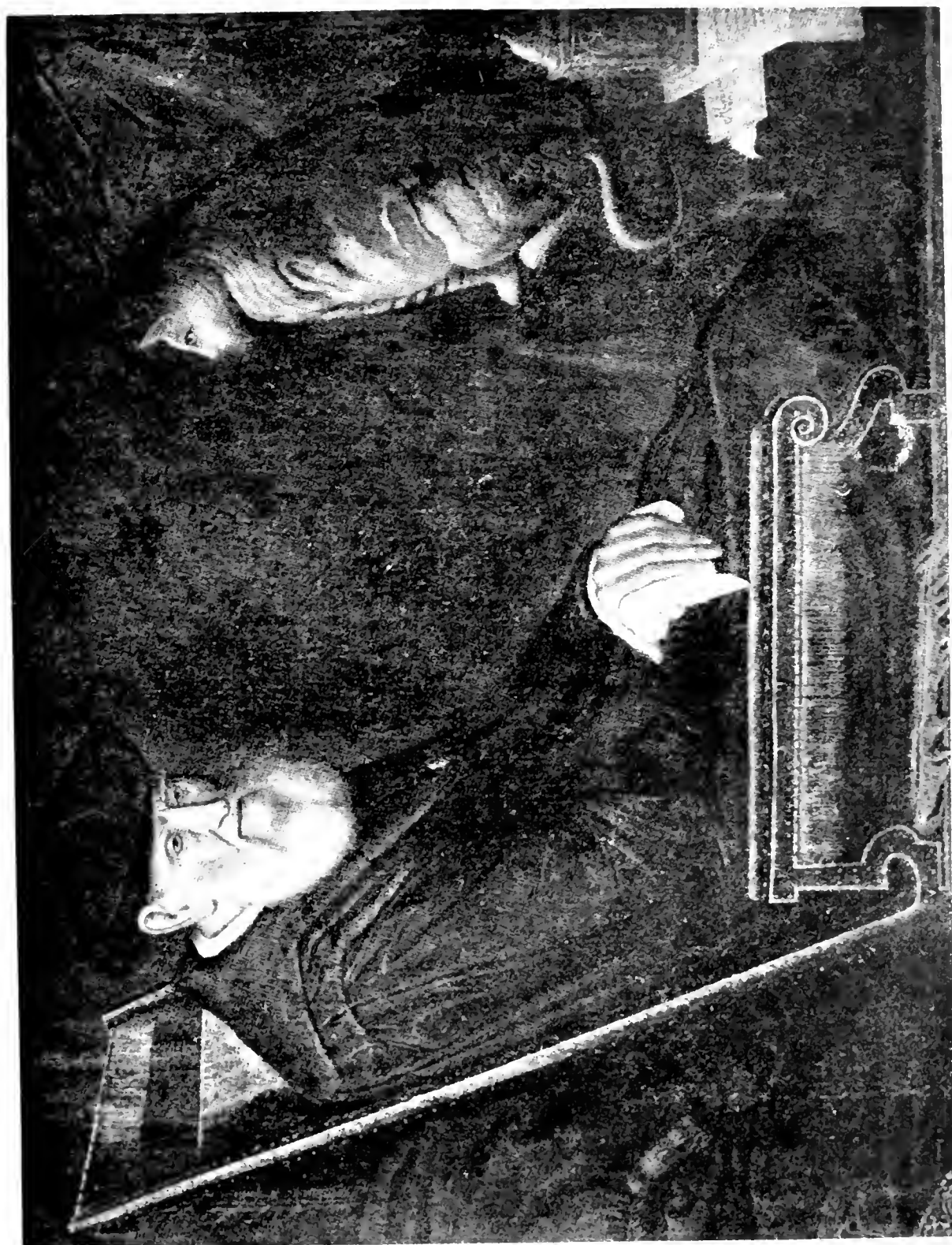
### II

The lifestory of Andrea Doria — succinctly the history of all Europe of his day—is as convincing as any in the annals of the city of Genoa, he was the embodiment of Ligurian grit, the individualisation of Ligurian romance, and the personification, in masculine terms, of the "Proud City" herself. In saluting his memory we render homage to the "Queen of the Seas." Born on Saint Andrew's Day, in the year 1466, at Oneglia on the Riviera di Ponente, seventy miles from Genoa, he was the second son of Signore Ceva Doria, Lord of Oneglia, and head of the branch of that great ruling house, which had been established there

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well over a hundred years. As a youth, Andrea was wild and adventurous, ever in and out of scrapes ; repeatedly he ran away from home—to sea, to Genoa or up into the mountains—only to be brought back in disgrace for punishment. At last, an aunt on his mother Madonna Lisabetta's side—they were Spinola—made the scapegrace her heir, on condition that he would give up his wild companions and his roving habits, and settle down to the sensible pursuits of his family.

At the early age of seventeen Andrea had the misfortune to lose his father suddenly : he died without having safeguarded his property, and a good-for-nothing brother of his, Giovanni, seized upon the estate and turned the widow and her children out of their home. This appeared to sober young Andrea, for he gave up his harum-scarum ways, and, like a good son, stood up in defence of his mother, whom he dearly loved. He was at that time of bereavement, according to a family diary, “ tall, well-built, with a pleasing face and two searching eyes. His memory was extraordinary, he became serious and then religious—reciting daily with reverence the ‘ Litany of the Blessed Virgin.’ ” Although amorously disposed and much attracted by women he put them all scrupulously from him. Abstemious in a marked degree, he never allowed himself more



ANDREA DORIA.  
Tiziano Vecellio.  
PALAZZO DORIA PANTILLI, GENOVA.



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than two meals a day and never drank wine which was not well diluted with water." These early habits and tastes clung to Andrea Doria throughout his long and busy life. For nine years, and until her death in 1494, Madonna Lisabetta lived in the utmost satisfaction and thankfulness for her son's devotion. She dreamed that her favourite child would become—as most mothers dream—a brilliant light in the great day of his country, but such a realisation as that achieved by him was certainly far beyond her wildest hopes.

Soon after Madonna Lisabetta's death Pope Innocent VIII. raised a cry for help and defence in the cause of the Holy See, and into Andrea Doria's heart there crept once more enthusiasm for adventure and exploit. Having no ties in Oneglia—he had not married—he offered himself and his patrimony to His Holiness, and being accepted he was enrolled under the yellow banner of the Crossed Keys of St Peter as a man-at-arms, and took service with his relative, Condottiere Niccolo Doria, Captain of the Papal Guard. This was a final good-bye to Oneglia, for he never returned there, although in later years he twice sailed in shore, upon an alien warship of which he was commander, to view the birthplace of his family, but not to set his foot within his parental house.

When Alexander VI. succeeded to the Papal

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Throne Andrea Doria entered the service of the Della Rovere family and soon became famous as one of the leading Condottiere of the Italian peninsula. At Urbino he fell madly in love with the fascinating Duchess, but ran foul of the tyrant Cesare Borgia, who had seized the dukedom and laid siege to the heart of the amorous chatelaine. The Duchess disguised her lover Andrea and sent him beyond his rival's lines, whilst she put in his bed a dummy which she and her maids had made. She then invited Borgia to look at his sleeping rival, but not to disturb him until she gave the word. When the tyrant found out the ruse he went mad with rage, threatened his hostess's life, and exclaimed: "The escape of the Condottiere makes me more angry than if I had lost a battle!"

For ten years Andrea led an unsettled life—his sword at the service of the most liberal and courageous master. But when, in 1504, Giuliano della Rovere was elected Pope by the style of Giulio II., Capitano Niccolo, under whom Andrea was again fighting, left Corsica to support the new Pontiff, the young Condottiere succeeded to the vacant command, and speedily broke the back of the rebellion. Under Doge Giano Fregoso he was, in 1512, appointed "*Prefetto del Porto di Genova*," and then began his career as sea-lord—a career as



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varied and as romantic as it is possible to conceive. Fighting loyally for the country of his birth, he, apparently upon trivial grounds, transferred his sword and skill by turns to the French and the Spanish kings, and then turned his weapon against his enemies within the gates of Genoa. Whichever party had Andrea Doria for its leader that party won hands down—he was the Ever-Victorious General-Admiral of Genoa. His triumph was complete in 1525 when the whole Riviera submitted to him, and he carried hostages to Genoa, where he freed the city of her foreign masters, gave her a new constitution, and established himself as overlord, under the title of “*Censore*” for life.

Then, and not till then, Admirale Andrea turned his attention once and for all to Cupid’s warfare and allied himself, not to a beauteous duchess or a fascinating *gentildonna*, but to an elderly and respectable woman of the middle class—although bearing the noble cognomen of Usodimari—one of the original twenty-eight “*Alberghi*” in the “*Libro d’Oro*.” She had been born in the House, though not of the House, and had been useful to Andrea Doria, as a kindly nurse, when she tended him after wounds received in one of his naval expeditions. “I want,” he said, “a companion, not a lover of my person nor the mother of a family.” Admirale Andrea Doria and Donna Peretta

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Usodimari were privately married in November 1528, at the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, and none of the gossips had anything at which to cavil—a most unusual circumstance in such affairs, and especially so in Genoa! Perhaps the venerable ages of the couple—he was sixty-two and she two years his senior—saved the situation. Anyhow Andrea proved the truth of the Ligurian proverb: “*Chi, incontra buona moglie ha gran fortuna!*”—“He who gets a good wife is very lucky!”

Alas! we have no clear likeness of Signora Peretta Doria, but—high up in the roof of San Matteo—the church and mausoleum of the Dorias—was painted, by Andrea Doria’s command, his portrait and hers: these unhappily have been mutilated by the hands of time and man, and what remains of features and persons is almost undistinguishable. Good Peretta Doria rose nobly to the grandeur of her station as mistress of her husband’s palace and sharer of his rank as Duke and Prince of Malfi—conferred upon him by the Emperor Charles V. She gave no cause for fault-finding nor disdain, whilst her heart went out to every worthy object that came within her notice.

The story of the corsair Draguto and Princess Peretta is romantic in the extreme—as well as indicative of her kindly sympathy. No pirate of the deep inspired more terror by his de-

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predations, as bold and as daring as they could be, than Zanuto Draguto the Tunisian. Ports, ships, mariners and peaceful coast-side people all suffered at his hands. He was a splendid-looking fellow, his figure imposing, and his bearing that of a warrior bold, conspicuous for unflinching courage, and the hero of valiant deeds, with all the chivalry and good breeding of a knightly Crusader. At length, after countless dashing exploits and hairbreadth escapes, the fine fair buccaneer fell into the hands of Andrea Doria's kinsman, Giannettino, who was cruising off the coast of Corsica on the look-out for him. Brought in chains to Genoa, he appealed straight off to Princess Peretta, who, to the astonishment of everyone, pleaded his cause and obtained for his ransom the coral pearl island of Tabarca. It was said that the Princess—old woman that she was—experienced all the delights of a romantic attachment for the good-looking corsair, and even permitted him to kiss her hand and her cheek. So Cupid came her way at last !

Two years after his public marriage to Princess Peretta, the Genoese Senate accorded Andrea Doria the splendid title of "Father and Liberator of the Country," with the Dogeship for life—the latter dignity he promptly declined—and presented him with the title-deeds of the palace in the Piazza San Matteo originally built

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by Cesare Doria, gallant Lamba's surviving son. The palace had been seized by the State and the property of the family confiscated after feuds between the Guelfs and Ghibellines, wherein the latter, with the Doria at their head, had been worsted and driven out of the city. Over the doorway of the palace is still the proud inscription: "Senat. Cons. Andreae de Oria. Patriae Liberator. Munus Publicum."

Thenceforward the Princess became the most considerable noblewoman in Genoa, but her quiet homely tastes led her to dress herself and furnish the palace simply in Genoese style. She found employment for many masters and operatives of the "*Cassacie*"—foreign goods and foreign fashions made no appeal to her; no doubt she took her cue from the conspicuous patriotism of her distinguished husband, whose motto was "*Tutto per Genova!*"—"All for Genoa!" We have indeed few details of Princess Peretta's life, and no notice of her death, but the veil of obscurity was lifted for the nonce when the great Prince-Admiral, in 1532, received and entertained, with sumptuous magnificence, his liege lord, the Emperor Charles V. of Germany and Spain. In the Imperial service he had gained notable victories over the Turks, and Pope Paul III. added to the Sovereign's gifts and honours the rare distinctions of a consecrated sword, helmet and

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girdle, with the noble title “ *Fidæ Defensor* ”—the sword is still to be seen in the Doria church of San Matteo.

Such a splendid banquet as that spread before his Imperial Majesty had never been seen in Genoa. Preparations for it were upon the most lavish scale, and Admirale Doria set upon the festal board the flagons, cups and plates of massive gold which he had captured from his Ottoman foes on sea and land. The palace, too, was newly furnished, and the Emperor's State bed brought to mind, by its magnificence, the storied golden emerald throne of Solomon. Andrea Doria received his Imperial guest at the portals of the palace, wearing Spanish uniform, with his Papal trophies and such a weighty gold collar of Spanish make that the Emperor covered his own less splendid chain. Amazement at the splendour of the appointments and service of the palace brought forth words of admiration, which the astute Prince-Admiral at once turned into tactful gratitude, by offering there and then the whole of the palace to his Sovereign. Charles accepted the superb gift—with perhaps a sly look askance at decorous Princess Peretta, and, perhaps, a kiss on the hand of hers he held within his own—but at once declared that the palace should never cease to be the residence of the senior branch of the house of Doria.

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After the banquet—where the delicate cooking of rich viands was matched by the untapping of rare Oriental and Ligurian wines, and where pageant, dance and minstrelsy charmed the Imperial Court, the *bon-vivant* host opened the lattice of one of the beautifully painted windows giving upon the port, and displayed to the Imperial eye the superb fleet of Genoese battle-ships, riding at anchor, fully manned, found and beflagged : at the same time gathering in his great flowing mantle of green Genoa velvet and brocade an armful of priceless dishes and *épergnes* he cast them all indiscriminately into the rippling salty water ! The Emperor was greatly moved by this vivid exhibition of wealth and self-negation and embraced his host upon the spot. Andrea, however, made no mistake, for, had he not given strict injunctions that the canal, just beneath his palace windows, should be carefully netted, explaining aside, with a twinkle in his eye, “ It is certainly preferable that these objects should lie once more in Peretta’s plate-closet than be for ever buried in the muddy bottom of the Port ! ”

It was whilst Andrea and Peretta Doria were living happily and usefully at their palace, in the Piazza San Matteo, that the dangerous conspiracy of Gianluigi Fiesco flung both the Doria and the whole of Genoa into the throes of a revolution. Palace intrigues and plots had many

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a time in Genoese story torn families apart and led to dire destruction and misery. This last attempt upon the *status quo* was hatched in the noble dwelling which the Fieschi had erected and adorned on the eastern side of the city, upon the hill of Santa Maria Inviolata dell' Assunta di Carignano, upon which church the family lavished great sums of money. The palace was on a grandiose scale, reproducing a portion of the Roman Vatican. The Pope made splendid gifts to his trustworthy noble Genoese adherents of columns of Eastern alabaster, panels of malachite, and over-doors of lapis-lazuli. Moreover the Fieschi had been bitten by the Medicean fever for the possession of antiques ; and fine statuary, in bronze and marble, was conspicuous both inside the palace and out. The ladies of the family gave time, design and toil in the elaboration of rare embroideries to hang alongside choice Oriental brocades and rare furs. No palace in Genoa contained so many treasures : the furniture was Florentine and Venetian.

The Fieschi were as ancient and as noble as any house in Genoa or the Riviera, but in one respect they differed from the other three great houses—the Doria, the Spinola and the Grimaldi—their ambitions and successes were ecclesiastical and political rather than commercial and military or naval. They were Guelfs, every man and woman of them, through many generations.

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They called themselves Counts of Lavagna in the Riviera di Levante, south of Chiavari, and the Emperor Frederic Barbarosa confirmed their titles and rights in 1158. In the thirteenth century cardinals and ambassadors galore maintained the distinction of the family—two of the latter grade were Genoese envoys to the courts of Edward II. and Edward III. of England.

Gianluigi Fiesco, the conspirator in chief, was the grandson of a former Gianluigi—the richest man in Genoa, whose average yearly income was 200,000 crowns (= *circa* £30,000): his father, Sinibaldo, on the other hand, was a scatter-coin. His mode of life and entertainments were upon a regal scale, and the womenfolk of the family were noted, even in “the city of bedizened noble ladies,” for the magnificence of their jewellery and the splendour of their garments. The mother of Gianluigi Fiesco was Contessa Maria, daughter of Bartolommeo Grosso della Rovere and niece of Pope Giulio II.—a woman of great personal attractiveness but consumed with ambition and insatiable love of intrigue. The lad, then in his teens, was so precociously well developed physically, and so highly endowed intellectually, that every woman and girl in Genoa called him “*Il Sebastiano*”—the saintly feminine model of manly perfection. Like his mother, fearless, unscrupulous and grasping, at eighteen his father’s death gave him the headship





LADIES OF GENOA PRESENT THE KEYS

OF THE CITY TO LOUIS XII.

AFTER A WOODCUT "VIE DE BAYARD."

Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris.



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of his House, and he made his accession to that dignified position the occasion of a gross insult to the Doria and Spinola—his hereditary foes.

“ Who,” he asked, “ are these miserable mushrooms? Andrea Doria is nothing better than the son of a common silk-weaver, he is a nobody, and he has not got a drop of blood like ours in his veins. Battista and Luca Spinola are of no account whatever. They are but the spigots of their wine-casks, keen-eyed money-grubbers—out upon the lot of them ! ”

The widowed Contessa Maria retired to the Castle of Montobbio, the Fiesco stronghold, above the gorge of the Trebbia near the road to Piacenza, not so very far away from the legendary cell of the Irish missionary Saint Columba. There she fixed her residence, as firm as “ an oak ”—her family cognisance—to watch the course of events in Genoa, and, at the same time, to use all the power she possessed in poisoning her son’s mind against his rivals, who held the “ Proud City ” and scorned the Fieschi. Moreover she conceived a great *rôle* for Gianluigi. “ Was not,” she urged, “ the noble Count Giacomo Fiesco King of Naples only a few year ago—why then should not my Gian be King of Liguria ? ” This was the aim she put before herself and pressed upon her son.

Matters came somewhat unexpectedly to a head the year after the young count had uttered

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his boastful threat. He had been affianced, in his father's lifetime, to Donna Gianetta, the young daughter of Messir Adamo Centurione—the next most wealthy man to Count Gianluigi in Genoa. The Centurioni belonged to an original "*Albergo*," and, later on, absorbed the Usodimari, the Demarini and other families. The day of the marriage approached, when, to the astonishment of all primarily concerned, and of all Genoa in general, the young bride-to-be nonchalantly broke off the contract and returned all her *fiancé's* gifts! She followed up this sensational dénouement by being immediately betrothed to Andrea Doria's favourite young kinsman and heir—Giannettino Doria—of all men in the world the most hated by Gianluigi Fiesco.

Many knowing individuals "Thrust out the Fig" at this announcement, for did not the world and his wife know perfectly well that the Princess Peretta Doria, although so simple in herself and so unoffensive, was a Usodimare? Had she, it was asked, a finger in the Centurione pie? Anyhow it was regarded as quite within the bounds of probability that Prince Andrea's venerable consort did a good deal to detach the young girl, so richly dowered, from her union with the rival house of Fiesco.

Gianluigi however took the affront, as it seemed, philosophically, with Della Rovere

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cunning he dissembled his hatred of the Doria, and disarmed suspicion by his deferential attitude toward the "Liberator of his Country."

With Giannettino Doria, who had so completely supplanted him in the affections of fickle Donna Gianetta Centurione, Gianluigi, to all appearances, kept upon the best of terms, and to the unrestrained surprise of all—who looked on with suspicion at such a glaring *volta face*—daily walked arm-in-arm with him down the Strada Nuovo and about the port. Apparently the grand old man, Andrea, was himself deceived, for he once remarked to Marchese Figuerroa—the Spanish Ambassador—who was his guest in the Piazza San Matteo: "Is that the sort of young man, open-hearted as you see, who could be guilty of treachery? He has my entire confidence, for I am persuaded that he is a true man!"

When Donna Gianetta so wantonly cast off her Alcibiades of a bridegroom he had not long to wait, nor far to seek, for a no less financially worthy object of his amorous ambition. Living quietly in Rome, under the guardianship of Cardinal Innocenzo Cibo, her uncle, was the fair young daughter of Count Lorenzo Cibo, Leonora. Her grandmother had been Princess Maddalena de' Medici, daughter of Lorenzo il Magnifico, and wife of Francesco Maria Cibo, a natural son of Pope Innocent VIII. Her mother, Ricciarda

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da Massa, was also of distinguished parentage—the eldest daughter of Marchese Alberico da Massa and Lucrezia d'Este, she was the widow of Conte Scipione Fiesco—a kinsman of Gianluigi. She was, historians say, “*di bellissima presenza.*” The houses of Cibo and Fiesco were of course intimately connected as wearers of the Scarlet Hat and of the Triple Tiara, so also were the Della Rovere. The policy of “keeping the money in the family” was eminently subscribed to by all these influential houses, and they aimed at keeping the highest honours too.

Leonora Cibo was a very beautiful girl, a real Roman beauty, much after the style and high breeding of Clarice Orsini, her great-grandmother, who was so greatly admired by Domina Lucrezia, the first “Queen of Florence.” She was just eighteen years of age—two years younger than Gianluigi Fiesco—highly accomplished and exceedingly well dowered. The betrothal by proxy was followed almost immediately by the marriage—first in Rome, in the presence of the Pope himself, and then by the Archbishop of Genoa in San Lorenzo, at the end of April 1546. It is a thousand pities that no scribe has written an account of the wedding ceremonies, nor given a list of the gracious company and of the costly presents.

The young wife was at once thrown into the vortex of Genoese politics—then seething to

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boiling point under the hot fires of party jealousy and family intrigue. She had, however, the cordial and impassioned support of her two aspiring and tactful mothers—her own and her husband's. If Contessa Maria aimed at a crown for her son, Marchesa Ricciarda was no less ambitious for her daughter. Andrea Doria was the chief obstacle in their way : he was virtually ruler of Genoa, to the extinction of Fieschi hopes, and a *persona grata* at Rome, for his able services in the past. He was a man, though old, of robust health, and possessed of a firm will and absolute prudence, so there appeared to be no hopes of an immediate or natural vacancy, and nothing could be done in furtherance of Fieschi aims, than a secret pact or conspiracy—first of all to destroy the favour of the citizens, and next to do away with the venerable hero himself.

### III

Whilst the aspirations and the vanity of Gianluigi Fiesco were fanned by those redoubtable ladies the personal charms and fascination of the young Countess were not thrown away upon the nobles and citizens of Genoa. Indeed, what with her persuasiveness and the secession of Niccolò Doria, who had married Marina Gianluigi's sister, a remarkably stylish and good-looking

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girl, many of the old Doria faction made no secret of their approval of the young Count Fiesco's pretensions. Probably the arrogance and secretiveness of the old admiral had something to do with the veering of public opinion. Leonora undertook to rally the influential Adorni and other prominent citizen families to her husband's cause, and both she and Gianluigi made a confidant of Messir Barnabo Adorno—one of the heads of that family. He was the last surviving brother of reckless but repentant Giuliano Adorno—the husband of saintly Caterina Fiesca-Adorno. Feeling flattered at the attentions paid him by the haughty Fieschi he placed himself and his house unreservedly at the service of the young count and countess.

Countess Maria, on her part, was not idle, and, seeing that her plans were working propitiously in Genoa, she went off to Rome to crave the sympathy of the Papal Court. She succeeded in obtaining the ear of Paul III., who, persuaded by her blandishments no less than by her arguments, reversed his Genoese policy and accorded his blessing to her son's enterprise—his “faithful loving son” as he called him. Privately, and for various reasons, His Holiness hated Andrea Doria; he was, for example, jealous of his intimacy with the Emperor Charles. So, when the post of Pontifical Lord High Admiral fell vacant, he appointed Gianluigi Fiesco, and



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accompanied his favour with an expression of confidence that he “would do his utmost to checkmate Admirale Andrea Doria!” The countess returned to her fortress-villa well satisfied with her mission.

Meanwhile Marchesa Ricciarda had not been idle; she hurried off to Rapallo, where the population was greatly in favour of the Fieschi, and ready to rise in their behalf. Her own house — Massa-Carrara—was not without influence all along the Riviera; besides, personally, as an erstwhile Fiesca widow, she had her own appeal to their sympathies. She discanted upon the enormities of the Doria and upon the greed and intolerance of Prince Andrea; and she enlisted from excited assemblies of partisans the memorable cry: “*Gatto netto!*”—“Sling the cat!” or, better still, “Wipe out the lot!” Fortified by these demonstrations the Marchesa returned to Genoa to be near her daughter, whose confinement was imminent. These three handsome, accomplished and intriguing noblewomen were even “better than a regiment of soldiers,” as St Jeanne d’Arc once said of René of Anjou, and their influence permeated every section of Genoese society in and beyond the city. Good-natured and peaceable Princess Peretta Doria was no match for them, nor did she apparently stir herself in the least to guard her husband’s position.

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Gianluigi Fiesco, it need hardly be said, was as active as his womenfolk in plottings against the Doria. Together with Barnabo Adorno, he called to his intimate counsel Giovanni Battista Verrina—a popular leader among the silk-operatives, and an unscrupulous non-compromising reactionary, who hated the Doria and Spinola as much as did Gianluigi himself. Three other malcontents were also enlisted—first, Raffaele Sacco of Savona, a member of the judicial bench. Savona was a famous academy of eminent lawyers, where also the Adorno influence was considerable. He was a weak sort of man, vacillating in his prejudices, but distinctly in his favour was his undisguised hatred of the Doria. The fourth and fifth abettors of the conspiracy were Vincenzo Calcagno and Gerolamo Fiesco—the former a page of the Pontifical Court, in attendance upon the Lord High Admiral, a man of great determination of character, but never so happy as when interfering in the business of other people; the latter, Gianluigi's younger brother, who, although not old enough to take an active part, was useful as a go-between where doubtful adherents were concerned. He was a very handsome lad, well skilled in manly exercises, ambitious for his family's aggrandisement, and a marked favourite with the *gentildonne* of Genoa.

Verrina seems to have been the most strenu-

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ous of this council of war. Probably the fascinations of Countess Leonora were not thrown away upon him, indeed he once said to her: "Your husband, my beauteous lady, may be ruler of Genoa, if he will rely only upon the men of Genoa and not seek aid from France or Germany." To Gianluigi he counselled immediate action with no scruples about assassinations. "Genoa is used to seeing blood spilt," he exclaimed, "those who lavish most of it usually succeed best. I would have you, my Lord, bid us unsheath our weapons without delay." With the Florentine Pazzi Conspiracy in remembrance, Verrina suggested a special Mass at Sant' Andrea in honour of the Papal Jubilee, to which should be invited the Doria with Admirale Andrea Doria at their head, and he proposed that, during the singing of the Divine Office, they should fall upon and slay "the old villain." Gianluigi declined to adopt this murderous design as too risky, and instead offered a banquet at the Palazzo Fiesco to celebrate the marriage of his brother-in-law, Marchesa Giulio da Massa and Donna Peretta, the daughter of Andrea Doria's brother Tommaso. His idea was that, when the ladies left the hall, the men of the company should rise and slay Doria, Giannettino, his heir, and other prominent members of the family. The banquet was held in due course, but Fate ordered that Andrea should be seized

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with sudden illness, and that Giannettino should be called off on urgent state business in Corsica.

The next idea was a general rising in Genoa on Saint Barnabas' Day, 11th June. In some way, the news of this proposal reached the ears of the Spanish Ambassador, and he warned Andrea Doria, who again disclaimed suspicion and fear of the young Count : indeed he curtly asked the ambassador to mind his own business ! In furtherance of this design Gianluigi brought into the outer harbour four armed vessels, anchored them below the Monte di Carignano, and, at nightfall, disembarked one thousand armed men, disguised as peasants, operatives and slaves, ostensibly to assist in building operations at his new palace. In all this scheming the Countess Leonora was as her husband's right hand, she incurred many personal risks, but inspired one and all with confidence. Good old Paolo Panza, the Count's trusty old tutor, got wind of the affair and implored his young master and mistress to renounce the project, but she kissed the faithful mentor and bade him to be true to Gianluigi and herself.

On the Feast of St John Baptist, 1547, many of the gay and dashing young nobles and citizens were invited to a conference at the Fieschi Palace, and those who accepted were received by Countess Leonora and her two mothers—Contessa Maria and Marchesa Ricciarda. They

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were conducted to the Great Marble Hall, which was only dimly lighted. Outside in the *cortile* was distinctly heard the clash of weapons and the tramp of armed men, and Gianluigi entered in full armour but with his sword sheathed. Extending his mailed hand he saluted his guests and addressed them thus : “ My friends, brave and strong, I have invited you here to assist me in liberating our beloved city from the yoke of the Doria. If you will follow me we shall have no difficulty in achieving this object, which I am sure appeals to your hearty co-operation.” The assembly cheered this speech to the echo, and only two of the number refused their aid—Giovanni Cattaneo and Giambattista Giustiniano, and both were bound and lodged in a dungeon.

Just as the enthusiastic young swashbucklers were about to emerge from the chamber, Countess Leonora rushed in, threw herself upon her knees at her husband’s feet, and begged with sobs that he would not push matters to the extreme : “ Shed not blood, my Gian,” she cried, “ I tremble for thee and for these fair gentlemen.” Gianluigi raised her gently, kissed her sad young face wet with tears, and exclaimed, amid the plaudits of all the *bravi* : “ My love, thou shalt, ere to-morrow dawn, be the proudest woman in Genoa ! ” At that moment Verrina returned from a visit of observation in

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the city : he reported everything quiet and normal. The lordlings and the men-at-arms were divided into four parties : Girolamo and Ottobuono Fesco, brothers of the leader, to command an attack upon Porta San Tommaso, on the west ; Cornelio Fiesco and Barnabo Adorno an assault upon Porta del' Arco, on the east ; Verrina took in hand the seizure of the arsenal, whilst the division under Gianluigi himself went off to clear the streets and lanes of the city. Each man was ordered to strike down everybody who barred their way, or cried out in opposition : there was to be no quarter !

Distraught Countess Leonora, by woman's intuition, saw the deadly peril of the rising, and presentiment of failure led her to beat a precipitate retreat from the palace, with the view of concealing herself and her babe in some poor hovel until the danger was over. Her hurried footsteps—two faithful servants only being in attendance—led her right through the very centre of the fray, and turning aside, by the Porta San Tommaso she stumbled over a dead body all huddled up. Stooping down with an irresistible impulse, she uncovered the face, and, there, to her horror, she beheld the distorted features of no less distinguished a man and foe than Giannettino Doria ! At Princess Peretta's instigation he had sallied forth to see for himself what was going on in the city. It was said

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that as he approached the Porta San Tommaso he heard a tumult, and, finding the gate closed, and his way barred, he cried out who he was and demanded to pass through. He fell dead on the threshold, pierced through and through by many swords. With a ghastly smile the Countess smoothed the thick brown hair and wiped the blood and sweat off his brow, and then picking up his crimson silk velvet mantle, which had apparently fallen off his shoulders when he was attacked, and lay by itself a little distance from the corpse, she wrapped it over her shimmering green satin robe as a protection against Doria foemen. A strange report was rife in Genoa, when Countess Leonora could nowhere be found, that, running heedlessly along, the terrified woman encountered Girolamo Fiesco and his division, who, recognising the well-known garment of Admirale Andrea's heir, plunged his dagger to the heart of the wearer, and, all unknowingly, cast the fair young body aside, to wither and to die miserably in the public way.

The conspiracy was doomed to failure, for—although success attended the operations of three divisions of the conspirators—the chief and leader, Gianluigi Fiesco, himself lost his life. His passage through the city had been fortuitous, he was hailed as the deliverer of the city, and, at dusk, seeking rallies to his cause,

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he boarded a vessel in the port. In his eagerness to step again on shore he slipped off the landing gangway, and, being heavily weighted and incommoded by his armour, he sank in the harbour mud. It was dark and no one saw the Commander's peril; his cries for help were drowned in the tumultuous roar of carnage, and the ambitious young Count Gianluigi Fiesco sank, and sank, in the stinking slime, until the brackish water filled his helmet and choked him! It was an inglorious death—at the moment of victory—and the victim of fatuous disaster ceased his troubling at the all too early age of twenty-two.

The non-appearance of their leader produced confusion and uncertainty in the ranks of the revolutionaries, and when reports of foul play were bruited about, and proofs of the young Count's untimely end were forthcoming, consternation reigned supreme. Morning broke, and with it broke the homogeny of the enterprise. Each man thought of his own security rather than that of his party: confusion and flight dispersed the Fieschi and their allies. Whether in the pay of Andrea Doria, or on their own account, swords were whipped out by hundreds of citizens, and, for every man slain by the Fieschi, two were butchered in return. The old Admiral, ill in bed at the outbreak of the revolution, was borne off by his servants





THE BUSY KITCHEN-MAID.

Frate Bernardo Strozzi.

PALAZZO ROSSO, GENOA.



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to his farm at Masone, some dozen miles up the Polcevera valley. With him went, of course, his devoted spouse, Giannettino's widow, Giannetta, and her three children—Peretta, a good-looking girl of fifteen, Giannettino, a lad of twelve, who died the year after, and little Gianandrea, no more than eight years old, from whom is descended the present Prince Doria-Panfili.

The Government met immediately after the defeat of the conspirators and ordered the whole of the Fieschi, with their agnates, to quit Genoa at once, but they extended a free pardon to all except such as had been made prisoners in arms. This clemency astounded Andrea, and the death of Giannettino enraged him, so that the magnanimous bearing of the hero of a hundred fights changed to the vicious demeanour of a vindictive despot. His victor's coronal of green laurel leaves and scarlet berries he replaced, at least metaphorically, by a twisted tangle of piercing pine-needles.

Breathing out threats and imprecations, the fierce old man hastened back to Genoa—he was then well on to eighty-two years of age—and peremptorily ordered the condign punishment of his enemies. He further addressed a protest to the Emperor Charles, in which he said: "I entreat your Majesty not to allow the blood of your faithful servant, Giannettino Doria, to go

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unrevenged upon the traitors.” His rage first fastened upon the hastily buried body of Gianluigi Fiesco ; this he prevailed upon the Government to exhume, dishonour and sink out of sight with the city offal in the sea beyond the harbour. Siege was laid to the Castle of Montobbio, to which the chief conspirators had fled. The Genoese and Imperial troops reduced the garrison after a two months’ siege, and then Girolamo Fiesco, Vincenzo Calcagno and Verrina, were put to death. Raffaello Sacco and Barnabo Adorno escaped into Tuscany, where they were joined by Ottobuono and Sinibaldo—two of Gianluigi’s brothers. All four were, however, captured at the siege of Siena, five years later, and the furious old Admiral had the fell satisfaction of watching the two Fieschi placed in two sacks and clubbed to death ! Sciopione, the sole surviving Fiesco brother—a boy of twelve years of age, and a student at Padua—made good his escape to France, with his mother, Countess Maria, where they were welcomed by the King and Queen and treated with every mark of sympathy and honour : he ultimately entered the service of King Henry. The Queen, Caterina de’ Medici, was the Countess’s second cousin, and this accounts for the story of Countess Leonora, Gianluigi Fiesco’s young widow, having sought refuge at the French court—a confusion of names and dates.

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The magnificent new palace of the Fieschi was utterly destroyed—not one stone being left upon another—its priceless contents were scattered among hosts of common pilferers, and the only records of its existence, and, indeed, of the great Fieschi family in Genoa, are the fine wide Via Fieschi and a few memorials in the Church of Santa Maria Inviolata hard by. Andrea Doria carried his spiteful rancour to an inconceivable extent—he adopted as the mascot of his declining years a black cat, found in the ruins of the palace, and with this inoffensive creature by his side he directed that his official portrait should be painted, and handed down to posterity. Whenever the old man, it was asserted, recalled the Fieschi Conspiracy he was accustomed to smite the poor black cat heavily !

It is impossible to trace exactly what happened to young Countess Leonora and her child—if indeed it survived the horrors and the trials of that terrible calamity. Of her, anyhow, Petrarch's " Rime " CCXLIX. is true :

“ She hath left off the charms she used to wear,  
The pearls and garments and the raiment fair,  
With sweet speech and merry laugh and song.”

By some means or other she contrived to make her way to her mother's home at Massa, and there she remained in quiet retreat—her girl's dream of life, riches and a crown dashed to

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the ground. The story of her adventures, and the part she bore that short year in Genoa, added anyhow to her attractions, and not one suitor, but many a one, came Carrara-way to see the young widow in her weeds. Countess Leonora's mourning was short, for within a twelvemonth, among her admirers was an eligible and amorous noble—the youthful Marchese Giovanni Francesco da Cetona, Chamberlain in the Household of Grand Duke Cosimo I. of Tuscany. He had, however, a physical disqualification—immense bulk of body—"his thigh," so experts said, "measured more than his *fiancée's* waist." This objection was got over and their marriage was celebrated in the flashing white marble Palazzo Ducale, at Massa, in the presence of the doting mother, Marchesa Ricciarda Cibo, and the kinsmen of the duchy. The claims of military service parted the happy couple very shortly—the bridegroom being ordered off to Flanders, and, alas! for his lonesome wife, he never returned—he was slain at the siege of a Flemish fortress in the year 1557.

Poor, ill-fated Leonara—twice widowed and many a time beloved—remained at Massa until her mother's death, and then she retired to Florence, under the protection of the Grand Duke, where, repelling the amorous advances of that arch-tyrant and undoer of women, she entered a convent of the Medici, and ended her

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days in writing poetry and in religious exercises. The date of her death has not been recorded, but thus unchronicled there passed away from a chequered life one of the "Heroines of Genoa."

Alas! with all her diplomacy, Marchesa Ricciarda Fiesca-Cibo failed in her intrigue—the death of Gianluigi Fiesco, her son-in-law, frustrated all hopes of the fancied Kingdom of Liguria—Leonora could never be its Queen. No doubt the haughty noble dame felt her failure grievously—pride always hurts in the fall—but she had other ambitions, it is perhaps needless to say.

Two sons as well as Countess Leonora called her mother, Giulio, who succeeded the Marchese Alberico at Massa, and Filippo, her youngest child. She appeared to have had no family by her first husband, Conte Scipione Fiesco—for them her talents were displayed. But a shock, perhaps worse than the illusion of her daughter's crown, came, and it stunned the ambitious woman: her eldest son, the Marquis of Massa, married Peretta, the only daughter of Giannettino Doria! Peretta she was christened when the old Princess Peretta Doria held her at the font in San Lorenzo. This was a deadly thrust at dignity, but Marchese Giulio dealt his mother's pride and purpose a still more deadly blow when he joined the Dorias in yeoman service to the Empire!

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Once more were the astuteness and pertinacity of Marchese Ricciarda splendidly displayed—a mere man might have hesitated to take the line she chose. Not apparently in the least cast down by her failure on behalf of a Fiesco son-in-law—a Guelf of the Guelfs—she set her wits to play the Ghibelline for all that it was worth. Boldly she appealed in person to the Emperor Charles V. in favour of her son Filippo. The Emperor was projecting the constitution of a Kingdom of Italy under his own suzerainty, and the Marchesa, unabashed, sought the new throne for her son? It was a bold throw—a master stroke. Charles, taken aback, was won by her noble appearance, her splendid power of persuasion, and, perhaps, by the tragic humour of the situation. Probably he reflected that, with such a mother, the good-looking and very promising, as well as highly connected and fittingly cultured youth, introduced so fortuitously to his immediate notice by the brave Marchesa, was quite as eligible a candidate for the projected throne as he might find anywhere in Europe. The result of his Majesty's deliberations was promptly reached, and Filippo da Massa was adopted as King of Italy *in posse*.

The Emperor invited the young kingling to meet him at Genoa, there to invest him with the symbols of his sovereignty, and, at the same time, to pour the balsam of Imperial favour upon



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the distracted citizens. The embarkation at Civita Vecchia of the Imperial and Royal retinues was a stupendous undertaking, but a swift course carried the imposing fleet of ninety and eight armed warships into the harbour of Genoa. The whole city was *en fête*. and for fifteen days, pageants, tournaments, banquets, dancing and minstrelsy, turned night into day and prolonged the day beyond the night. Scenes of lavish prodigality were enacted in every palace and casa, and the poor—of such there were to be sure very few in opulent Genoa—and the ailing, with all sorts and conditions of men and women, partook whole-heartedly of the city's hospitality. Some idea of the general extravagance may be gathered from a characteristic episode : a peasant from the Bisagno, it was reported, who had come in with most of his fellow country people to share the good things, beheld, as he took his midday siesta in the shade of the Spinola Palace, where the Emperor was lodged, a personage, hurrying across the piazza clothed in cloth-of-gold and scarlet Genoese lace : in his hands he bore a golden vessel under a veil of choice silk lace, whilst over his head an attendant, no less sumptuously apparelled, held a crimson silk umbrella. The man rose at once, knelt, and devoutly crossed himself—he supposed that he was adoring the “ *Viaticum* ” borne to some dying person ! The gorgeous bearer of

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the golden dish was no more distinguished a member of society than the chef of the Duca d'Alva, the Emperor's chamberlain, who was carrying to the Sovereign a tureen of exquisite *consommé* as an offering from his sybarite subject!

Marchesa Ricciarda's life's mission was accomplished—one of her children, if not two, was a king. History says little or nothing about her latter days. Perhaps death mercifully called her away before a sea of anguish arose which would have embittered the evening of her life. In 1548, Giulio Cibo, Marchesa da Massa, strove to obtain possession of certain demesnes which had been part of the marriage dower of his mother. He asked the aid of Andrea Doria, his wife, Peretta's powerful relative, but, when the wary old Admiral refused to take part in the controversy, Giulio turned upon him, and with a considerable company of men-at-arms marched on Genoa. His idea was to excite the still latent Fiesco spirit and so to bring about the overthrow of the Government and the downfall of the old "Liberator." This abortive attempt failed, Giulio was taken prisoner by the Genoese troops at Chiavari, carried to Genoa, tried perfunctorily, condemned to torture, and finally executed.

The third plot in the reign of Andrea Doria was set on foot by no less an influential personage than the Emperor Charles V. himself. He had endeavoured, after the dispersion of Gian-

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luigi Fiesco's conspirators, to erect a protective wall around the city which would establish his rule in Liguria and reduce Genoa to a position of impotence. The Emperor's son Philip—afterwards Philip II.—was sent to visit the city in state, ostensibly to confer honours and privileges from his father. The Prince's suite included four thousand armed men and, at the same time, the Grand Duke Cosimo I. of Tuscany intimated his intention of paying a ceremonial visit to the "Proud City" with his wife, Eleanora of Toledo, and an imposing retinue of soldiers. The crafty citizens easily saw what really lay behind these military escorts, and they interned the Spaniards at Sestri di Levante, and asked the Grand Duke to postpone his visit, "till greater honours could be rendered to him and his Spanish consort!" Prince Philip arrived in due course as the guest of the republic and not as its master, and, as such, was magnificently entertained. Again the lovely young girls of Genoa formed a Royal guard of honour and wove garlands of flowers around his lovelocks.

Brave, ambitious and wary, Andrea Doria lived on and on, and not till ten years after the expulsion of the Fieschi did death claim his own. The courageous old Admiral had at eighty-eight taken personal command in the Corsican war. and then had retired to rest a short time at his villa at Fassuolo when news came that Gian-

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andrea, Giannettino's son, the apple of the old man's eye—had been defeated as Admiral-in-Chief of the Imperial Fleet, and was a prisoner and a galley slave in the hands of the Turks. This dire intelligence broke, at last, the hero's spirit and the shock killed him. Opening his dying eyes he cried out : " What news of Gianandrea ? " The silence was eloquent. With one last convulsive effort Prince Andrea sprang to his feet : " Good news, by the grace of God ! Thank God ! " he cried as one of his attendants whispered in his ear " Thy Gianandrea is free ! " Then he sank back and expired in the arms of his friends. It was a bleak autumn day, 25th November 1560. No mention is made of Princess Peretta : she had passed away quietly some years before her husband, and she rests with him in their simple tomb at San Matteo. By his explicit command the interment of his body was conducted without ceremony, and at night, in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, where also repose the ashes of Giannettino Doria.

Of Andrea Doria the Great, Gabriello Chia-  
brera—the poet of Savona and Genoa (1552-  
1637)—who celebrated in his lyrics the valour of  
the Geonese by sea, sang :

“ There never breathed a man, when his life  
Was closing, might not of that life relate  
Toils long and hard . . . . .  
. . . . . Fifty years

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Over the well-steered galleys did I rule,  
From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic Pillars,  
And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft.

What noble pomp and frequent have not I  
On regal decks beheld ! yet, in the end  
I learned that one poor moment can suffice  
To equalise the lofty and the low.  
We sail the sea of life—a Calm one finds,  
And one a Tempest—and then, the voyage o'er,  
Death is the quiet Haven of us all."

## CHAPTER V

### VILLAS, VILLA GARDENS AND THEIR COMPANY

#### I

THE climax of Genoese luxury and ostentation was reached when her nobles and opulent citizens set about building villas and laying out gardens. Their palaces in the streets of Genoa were certainly, in a special degree, emblems of pride and prosperity, but they did not afford their owners that complete personal satisfaction they sought in the prosecution of their selfish tastes and fancies. For architecture, sculpture and painting in themselves they had very little appreciation ; they employed artists merely as accidental assistants in their own sufflation. The finer the palace, the deeper the purse, was the sentiment which appealed to them. Indeed the grandeur of their city mansions oppressed them, the conventions set up by their erection and furnishing bored them, and the thousand and one worries connected with their upkeep distracted them.

Practically the man who built a palace had little or no time for its enjoyment, indeed his

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interest in his creation began and ended pretty much in haggling over the terms and prices of the artists and craftsmen he employed. He was a great deal more at home in his office or his warehouse casting up his ledgers, or chaffering with his like in the Piazza de' Banchi, and sipping his sherbet at his favourite *trattoria*, with its staff of buxom courtesans. The curiosity and espionage of neighbours and rivals also greatly disturbed his equanimity. His womenfolk—and here we touch the secret of secrets—were difficult to keep under what he considered sufficient restraint: they gossiped from palace to palace about his private affairs very much more freely than he liked. Children, too, were entirely out of place in the sumptuous apartments, besides they disturbed his siestas and annoyed his guests. Slaves, too, and domestics generally, were much more out of hand in those narrow tell-tale streets and chitty-chatty *salite* than he considered desirable. Besides, he was beset by beggars who thronged his doorway and assailed his causeway. “A crown,” it is said, “wearies the wearer’s head”—so the conventional toga and *berretta* of the streets were a source of annoyance to men, the most selfish, the most self-indulgent, the most self-righteous in Europe. Public city life was strained and entirely unnatural, and this jarred upon the baser tastes of the Signori: “*Ad orgoglio non manco mai cordoglio!*”

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“Pride makes for nothing else but discontent!” is still a trite Ligurian proverb.

The soul-consuming desire of a Genoese was for dignified seclusion, with ease of manners and freedom from criticism, and this he considered he attained when he had bought his land, laid out his grounds, and erected his villa outside Genoa and away from the madding crowd. This movement became emphatic in the seventeenth century, when the city stretched her borders all around and linked up many a suburban retreat. Every considerable family joined in the new rivalry, and the naturally agreeable conformation of the ground greatly helped in the contest. Sites for villas and gardens were nipped up at first cheap'y, but later on secured at considerable outlay.

The *gentildonne* of Genoa, no less than their lords and masters, loved their villas and their villa gardens. They were released there from many of the oriental restrictions of palace city life, and were very much more free to go their own way whilst their better halves were at a respectful distance. Without regret each fair craftswoman left her embroidery frame at the palace, weary, very weary of her needle and her wools and silks. Stiff card-parties found no venue at the villa, and the table-spreads there required less supervision and responsibility. At the villa the marchesa was not called upon





LA MARCHESA ELENA GRIMALDI-CATTANEO.

Anthony Vandyck.

PALAZZO CATTANEO, GENOVA.



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to preside at wearisome gustatory functions, furnished generally for clenching bargains with desirable merchant travellers or potential politicians from abroad. To be sure, she did not forgo entirely the love of dress nor the pleasure of ostentation.

Whether pretty women love fine clothes for their own sake merely, or for the effect produced upon the opposite sex, and upon their own, is a moot point which will probably never be settled. The *castellana* could dress as she wished at the villa, and trail her long silk and velvet skirts, or not, up and down the marble steps, over the gravelled paths, and across the yielding mossy lawns—receiving, as she passed, the respectful salutations of the *contadini*. It was very little trouble to carry to and fro on backs of slaves or mules *cassoni* full of favourite garments and indispensable foibles. The brilliancy of the sun's rays mattered little, for had she not the attendance of a swarthy liveried young slave-boy to bear aloft her big gold and vermilion umbrella? On the other hand the marchesa might assume at the villa plain attire, sententiously agreeing with the spirit of the suburbs, and enter into rustic occupations with the work-people of the estate.

Every knoll and eminence had ever had its church and monastery all round the busy toiling city, and to these were added the villas

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of the aristocracy. The signori were gratified to pose as patrons of the suburban clergy and of the local charities, and lived on the best of terms with their ecclesiastical neighbours, who quite characteristically, and in the best of taste, of course, took liberal toll of their lord's good things! Almost every noble family was careful to be in residence at their villa in Rogation-tide and on the Feast of the Ascension, and to surround themselves with congenial company what time the Vicario paid his annual benedictory visit. The worthy priest, vested in his best maroon sottana and his finest lace-crocheted and folded cotta, and accompanied by his two best-looking acolytes, generally arrived during the midday siesta. His great red pocket-handkerchief was useful to remove dust and perspiration, whilst, with a square of fine white lawn he whisked off the troublesome flies, and, at the same time, displayed his rare old gold ring of office. Received at the entrance of the *salon* of the villa by the signore, he was courteously conducted to the signora, and introduced to the visitors. The ladies usually wore full silk dresses of green, white and gold, with their peculiar double sleeves, richly embroidered with small pearls and sequins, as consonant with the spring season. Then politely declining heavier refreshment, the priest pleurably accepts a *piccolo bicchiere* of his host's best-loved *bevanda*.

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Seated by the marchesa's side—perfect courtier as he was instinctively and tactfully—he entertains the company with polished chit-chat and well-bred humour, and presently rising he gently implants a kiss upon the fair beringed hand of the *castellana* and announces that the brief ceremony which he has come to perform is about to commence.

Meanwhile the two pretty boys have been carried off by the young signorini and signorine to the pantry and have there been regaled with cakes and fruits and wine and have also patted the pet spaniels and talked to the parrots.

The Vicario now carefully adjusts his richly embroidered silk stole—with its collarette of delicate point lace—a gift, probably, of the noble marchesa and her own handiwork—superimposes his gold-rimmed spectacles upon his nose, and opens serenely his Office-book. A pinch of precious aromatic snuff from the marchese's gold-enamelled *tabacchiera* completes the preparations for the function. Preceded by his acolytes, vested in scarlet cassocks and newly washed and carefully folded short cottas, their bonnie cheeks shining quite as brilliantly as their curling raven locks—he conducts the distinguished company in procession from room to room. One lad carries a thick lighted candle upon its big, well-burnished, finely chased, antique, brass candlestick: the other bears a

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highly embossed brazen pail, polished like a mirror, and filled with holy water. Every now and then, in between his benedictory orisons, the Vicario scatters the consecrated water over the room and over the company. Returned to the *salon* he removes his stole and announces the termination of his visit.

Another little glass of liqueur is offered and accepted, and, in the sipping, he very adroitly and courteously prefers a petition for some favour or another from his noble lord and lady. “An olive-tree,” for example, “growing certainly in the soil of my lord’s grounds, hangs all its branches over the insignificant garden plot of my priest’s house, the value of the yearly shaking does not exceed one hundred ducats, but, inasmuch as the harvest is gathered upon my sheets, may I crave the privilege of retaining it to help my small income?” or, “There is a little gate in the wall of my lord’s estate which opens immediately upon a shady walk, leading up through the grounds from the city boundary. I find it very hot and fatiguing to mount the dusty winding highroad, may I seek the favour of a key, and of freedom to use that pleasant pathway?”—and so forth. Such petitions were usually granted off-hand and the good man departs, cheered and, furthermore, enriched by a handsome donation in current coin.

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A final blessing of the kneeling company brings the ceremony and the visit to an end, and then, with courteous bows, the three ecclesiastics emerge from the villa portico upon the sun-drenched drive, fragrant with the perfume of roses and carnations. The serving members of the household are awaiting their turn to be sprinkled, and to conduct the Vicario around the villa and down to the outbuildings and the houses of the employees. Everyone carries a lighted taper, every window has its lighted taper, and every kneeling peasant has his lighted taper, all flickering and guttering in the hot breeze. The last sight from the villa of the Ascension-tide *andata* is down and down the carriage-drive to the great iron gateway, between rows of nodding palms and eucalyptus where the rustling music of sugar canes and flowering cannas joins in harmony with the simple hymns of the rustic worshippers.

. . . . .

The Genoese were not sportsmen in the sense of personal prowess, they liked well enough to watch their dependants engage in athletic contests and country pastimes, but the pleasures of the open hills and dales did not tempt them to emulation. This is a marked characteristic of course of the middle-class of all nations. The love of sport is hereditary, and men risen from the ranks rarely become efficient in sportive

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exercises. Shooting and hunting found few votaries among the leisured moneyed classes. Game was preserved not for sport but for ostentation. To have slain or captured trophies did not enhance their value in the estimation of men who could purchase in the market what they required with far less trouble and fatigue. The play of bowls occasionally, and the quieter games of ball, were sufficient for men not addicted to exercise. The *gentildonne* followed suit, and, indeed, it was accounted indelicate for a Genoese maiden to show her limbs in rapid movement. Dancing resolved itself into slow figures, and children's romps were not encouraged by their elders. In all these respects Genoese society fell far behind that of Florence and Venice, where boldness in effort and slowness of performance were applauded. Madame Swetchine has put into one concise sentence the character of the Genoese, so far as their love of ease is concerned: "Gênes," she writes, "rend paresseux. De sa fenêtre on y jouit trop pour qu'il n'en coûte pas d'aller chercher au loin ses curiosités."

## II

The Villetta di Negro—the creation of Marchese Calvo di Negro, of the line of Luca di Negro, the hero of Monteleone, in 1326, the eighth of



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his noble house, one of the original twenty-eight "*Alberghi*"—was famed for its beauties and renowned for its brilliant scenes and gay habituées. The marquis was a man, unlike the majority of the Genoese nobles, remarkable for his culture and refinement. The gross tastes of his compeers had little charm for him, his table and its appointments were restrained by true canons of virtuosity, and his most honoured guests were not vulgar, wealthy citizens but men and women artists and *litterati*. Nevertheless, a Guelf of the Guelfs, like his ancestors, he yielded to none in patriotism as a son of Genoa, nor yet in keenness in the whirligig of finance. Above all he was a devout disciple of Lorenzo il Magnifico, and of Francesco I. of Florence in the school of eclectic humanism.

Marchese Calvo purchased the site from an impoverished member of the Fregosi family, which house acquired it when the Fieschi conspiracy dissipated the property of those proud counts. It was the most central, and perhaps the most picturesque, in the neighbourhood of the port. The laying out of the gardens and the erection of the villa he superintended himself, taking as his model the Medici villa of Fiesole and the gardens of Pratolino. It was a Lombardo Gothic edifice in stone, richly sculptured, and internally gorgeously decorated, and filled with art treasures. The Belvedere, on

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one of the highest points—a most tasteful building in the classical style peeping out of a mass of cedars, catalpas and aloes—still offers an unrivalled panorama over land and sea, but little of the marchese's work remains.

The gardens were four in number, facing the points of the compass. The aspect of the first gave upon the seaboard: it was a rock garden entirely artificial in construction, but the effect produced was that of a series of sea-caves and coves, with clumps of stone-pines, agaves and prickly pears. Shells, corals, seaweeds and aquatic plants bordered limpid pools, full of fish and shining pebbles. In this retreat of "Venus of the Sea Foam" entertainments were given of a sympathetic character. "Figurantes"—part nymph, part mermaid—delighted the eye with gambles in and out of the water, and, in unwary moments, the unsuspecting visitors received douche-like greetings from the sea-maidens. Hidden musicians gave forth strident chords on horns, on shells and gongs. Pelicans and cormorants mated and moulted on the weedy rocks.

The garden, facing east, opened upon the toiling city, with its movements and its noise. The marquis built sculptured terraces with statuary and vases. Kaleidoscopic effects of gay parterres of fragrant flowers were graded by ornamental boxes, filled with pomegranates,

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myrtles and oleanders. There were springing spraying fountains, with many cunning devices to amuse, if also to wet, the merrily stepping company. Stately minuets and measured dances were *à la mode* for belles and beaux, attired in sumptuous toilettes. The music of taboret, dulcimer and harp disharshened the city cries. Peacocks and Asiatic pheasants preened themselves upon the velvet lawns.

To the north a great expanse of so-called "wilderness" carried the eye over the bare rocks and climbing heights of the lower Apennines and Alps. Nature, as parodied by art, was apparently left to herself: *boschetti* and cover for game were filled with graceful animals—deer, chamois and foxes—and sportive birds,—herons, snipe and quail. Upon the spreads of gravel and greensward games and pastimes were enjoyed, wherein skill in performance counted for more than grace in pose. Here were butts for archery—the Genoese were always renowned for their skill with bow and arrow. Each noble had, among his retainers, a company of bowmen, who competed yearly for prizes at fixed ranges and in the pursuit of game. The music of this garden was furnished by merltons, zithers and trombones—more or less in keeping with the wild spirit of the pleasaunce.

Facing west was perhaps the most delightful

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of all the gardens—a landscape garden, such as we British love, where were woodland groves and great spreading forest trees with all the fruit trees of the orchards. Sloping lawns, waterfalls and shrubberies were interspersed with carriage drives and country walks. Music, dance and song delighted the festive company, and *fêtes galants* and pastoral plays engaged the lovely *gentildonne* and their “dangler” cavaliers. Violins, guitars and mandolins lent the sympathetic tones of well-tuned strings. Every arbour had its loving couple; every rond-point its posturing quartet. Nightingales and thrushes sang in the laurel-trees and swifts and swallows flitted hither and thither. To this beauteous retreat were attracted poets and lovers of romance, among them the most ecstatic in his praise was Torquato Tasso. In his “*Gerusalemme Liberata*,” inspired by the amenities of Nature and the delights of Art at Villetta di Negro, he sings of the “Garden of Alcinous” and of the “Palace of Armida”:

“Gardens on every side their charms do show,  
Dress'd in gay flowers rob'd in verdure green,  
Silver lakes reflect Phœbus' golden glow,  
Shady glades and trees nodding kindly screen,  
Deep mossy caves and arbours on the heights  
Invite to sweet repose or revel in delights.

·   ·   ·   ·   ·   ·  
The joyous birds, concealed in every grove,  
With sweetest strife, prolong the song of love,  
·   ·   ·   ·   ·   ·

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There sat Armida 'pon a flowery couch,  
Her wanton lap the hero's head sustain'd,  
Her open veil her ivory breasts reproach,  
He cares not, for his fill of love is gain'd.  
Close to his, her own rose-red cheek she lays,  
With many a kiss the pledge of love he pays."

. . . . .

From this rhapsody we seem to be almost rudely torn, when we hear the rich Tuscan voice of Leonardo da Vinci moralising in our ear : " Intellectual love drives out sensuality ! " Yes, the delights of Villetta di Negro were not only for the amorous souls of Genoa : they were enjoyed both by the votaries of the Graces and by the followers of the Liberal Arts. If we may believe Achille Neri, who wrote about the gorgeous Vivaldi Tournament in 1562, when the arena, the Piazza delle Fontane Morose, was adorned by the most beautiful women of Liguria—the *gentildonne* of Genoa were remarkable for notable virtues : (1) chastity of mind, (2) beauty of person, (3) distinction of intellect, (4) sincerity of faith and (5) ardency of love : " yielding place to no other noble women in or out of Italy ! " The motto of the *giostra* was : "*Que persistet dignus est !*" whilst the greetings of the cavaliers, in the twenty and one contests, were addressed thus to the tribunes of beauty and fashion : "*Nihil video sine te !*" another rendering of the gracious maxim : " None but the brave deserve the fair ! "

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Among the glittering be vies of intellectual and virtuous damsels who delighted in the beauties and revelled in the romances of the Villetta di Negro and similar pleasaunces were such *gentildonne* as Peretta Scarpa-Negrone and Livia Spinola, who wrote poems of the heart and the home ; Benedetta—Livia's sister—and Caterina Gastadenghi—she sang and played the folk-songs of Liguria ; Leonora Cibo and Pellegrina Lescara, sweet translators of the "*Æneid*" of Virgil and the Odes of Horace. Each villa and villa garden had their special attractions and special coteries. The Villa Durazzo, on the way to the Polcevera, was famed for its unique waterworks, its masses of fruit trees, its terraces with statuary, its fish-ponds and its grassy lawns. Two splendid emblematical statues adorned the plateau—"Polcevera" and "Bisagno." The villa itself was of marble, with frescoes by Gregorio Defferari and Domenico Piola. In the bijou Villa Durazzo dello Scoglietto lived Marchesa Lucrezia Porretto, learned in divinity and physical science, and much given to charity. Beautifully decorated by Niccolo Traverso, it was remarkable for its marble staircases and its range of immense cedars. The Durazzo Villa at Cornigliano had wonderful beds of exotic flowers and borders of rare plants. Song birds and graceful animals were to be heard and



THE "BATH OF DIANA"  
IN A VILLA GARDEN.  
AFTER A STIPPLE ENGRAVING.  
T. Stothard, R.A. Augusto Fox.





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seen in the groves, and the Marchesa Benedetta had a museum of stuffed animals quite unique in Liguria.

The Villa Cattaneo, formally Lomellini, at Pegli, at the foot of Monte Olivieto, was built in 1760 by one of the last Doges of Genoa—Agostino Lomellini. He was famous in the world of politics, letters and science. The villa had frescoes by Bernardo Castello, and the gardens had grottoes, temples, statues and fountains galore. Here the Cattanei beauties, whose portraits hang in jealous seclusion in the great palace in Genoa, spent happy days, although many a fair dame had her trials as well.

The Pallavicini were great lovers of the beauties of nature, as they were of most other lovely objects—women in particular—they possessed several villas with charming gardens. They were a Lombardo-Teutonic family, allied with the Vivaldi, Gentileschi, Salvaghi, and others from the north, and were enrolled in the first "*Libro d'Oro*." It would not be fair to press home too sternly the meaning of their picturesque names — "Sneaks" or "Rob-Neighbours." Still, their pre-eminence was the result of successful rivalries with their compeers. There are many branches of the parent stock—that of the Genoa settled in Liguria in the tenth century. They looked back to Adalberto Pal-

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lavicino as their founder, who, in 1241, received the proud title of Lieutenant of the Emperor Frederick II., in Liguria. They were intermarried with the ruling houses of Estense, Malaspina and Da Massa. The Pallavicino Marquisate ultimately embraced the whole country between Cremona, Piacenza and Genoa.

Guglielmo Pallavicino in 1353 was invested with the Marquisate of Genoa and ruled nobles and citizens with an iron will. His brother Orazio (Horatio) was a great traveller, and visited the court of pious Queen Mary of England, who appointed him Collector of Peter's Pence. True to the nick nomenclature of his family, the wily Genoese paid court to the Queen's sister, the base Elizabeth, and, after her succession to the throne, made himself useful to her Grace as a go-between between herself and some of her so-called lovers. His reward was the accolade of knighthood and the Babraham estates near Cambridge. In second nuptials the tactful courtier married Lizbeth, daughter of Mynheer Van Troon of Haarlem, who bore him three daughters. Upon Sir Horatio's death Lady Pallavicino wedded Sir Oliver Cromwell, grandfather of the Protector, whose three sons married their half-sisters—the Pallavicini girls—and stern Oliver's mother was consequently a Genoese, in spite of the claims of Mistress

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Elizabeth Steward to that distinction ! The Protector was always markedly the friend of Genoa, and once, when the Spanish Ambassador belittled the Ligurian Republic, he was reprimanded : “ Don’t you know,” cried Cromwell, “ that England and Genoa are sister republics, and that they are both under the ægis of the great St George, hence must they always do each other mutual honour ? ”

The two most remarkable Pallavicini villas and gardens were Delle Peschiere and that of Pegli. The founder of the first was the Marchese Francesco Maria : it was situated on the umbrageous slopes of Monte Croce, across the Polcevera, just over Cornigliano. It was noted for the luxuriance and variety of its fragrant trees and shrubs—pepper, cinnamon, camphor and mimosa, with date-palms, magnolias, vanilla, cork-trees and azaleas. The villa was surrounded by colonnades of marble, and had a splendid suite of sculptured terraces, over which flashing jets of sparkling water dipped right down to the shore. In marble basins, or in shady sylvan pools, Genoese nymphs and mermen were wont to hold sweet human converse—harmonious in form and gesture. The delights of the Villa delle Peschiere overcame Lord Byron, who, reposing in its quiet arboreal nooks, and entranced by the songs of nightingales and the murmurings of running brooks, uttered many

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a sweet sonnet, and probably composed "*Manfred*," his masterpiece.

The villa gardens of Pegli, as now arranged, are of very recent date, they are due to the Marchese Ignacio Pallavicino, who pulled down the old villa and dug up the natural pleasaunce in 1837, replacing them with rococo frivolities. *Gentildonne* of the Pallavicini there were, beautiful and also witty—Donna Maddalena, who wrote poetry and treatises on economics, and Donna Argentina, wife of Guido Rangone, "whose literary accomplishments were the theme of the wisest men of Europe." She also attracted less reputable worthies, for that amorous libertine Aretino dedicated to her his comedy "*Lo Marescalco*." At Voltri is the Villa Brignole-Sale, the property of a noble family, famed for their benevolence, and for the splendours of their marriages: Brignole-Sale wives were among the most lovely girls in Genoa, who, if the profane chronicler may be believed, were also remarkable for their vanity. An old proverb of the littoral runs thus: "He who falls in love with a vain woman is like a man who sows his seed on the sand: all the year round he is waiting and hoping, and, at last, he has a crop of weeds!" The lovely faces and graceful figures, with their delicate lace ruffs and green silk gowns, of the Marchese Paola and Elena, whose charms Vandyck has so admirably

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preserved in his rich canvases, certainly indicate not a little self-conceit—a very pardonable and a very attractive failing in a beautiful woman !

. . . . .

It was only what might be expected that the intimate knowledge which pastimes in the villa gardens afforded *gentildonne* and children, of the wonders and beauties of Nature, made still more attractive by Art, should have profitable results. Perhaps botany, of all natural sciences, is the one which appeals most strongly to women : they are the most bewitching blossoms in the garden of humanity, and find their closest affinities in lovely and fragrant flowers ! Among many students of the beauties of nature in Genoa, one stands out brilliantly upon the verdant tapis—Madonna Clelia Durazzo Grimaldi.

Born in the splendid Pallavicini Palace—formerly the Scala—in Via Balbi, in the year 1760, of Signore Giacomo Durazzo and Signora Maddalena Pallavicini—both members of most distinguished and wealthy families—she inherited from her father the marked nobility of bearing which characterised the best strain of Genoese society, and from her literary mother rare mental capacity. Her education was completed at the cultured Court of the Dukes of Milan, where she learnt ease of deportment and

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gained an aptitude for study—points somewhat beyond the range of home-made Genoese.

Signore Ippolito Durazzo, her uncle, an enthusiastic collector of rare plants and flowers, struck with his niece's talent, encouraged her love of the beautiful by unfolding to her the mysteries and the purposes of the vegetable kingdom. She spent much of her time at his villa, in the Polcevera, and there began the collection of botanical specimens and of books which ultimately made her famous in the annals of Genoa. Whilst so engaged the young naturalist attracted the notice of another lover of nature, Signore Guiseppe Grimaldi, whose villa at Pegli was famed for its lovely gardens. Sympathy in virtuosity quite easily prepared the way for the closer bond of mutual admiration, and when Signorina Clelia reached the age of eighteen she was espoused to Signore Guiseppe and became the mistress of his gardens and collections.

The even tenor of their happiness was rudely disturbed by the French Terror of 1797, which had dire effects in Genoa, and the couple sought safety in flight to Parma, where the Signora made use of her adversity by attending the botanical lectures of Professore Pascale. Before quitting Genoa she had made expeditions in every direction, up and down hill and along the seashore, and had, with her own hands, trans-

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planted gleefully many a treasure to her nursery at Pegli : at Parma she added considerably to her botanical library. Thence she and her husband, still like minded, travelled through Lombardy and Bavaria to Bohemia, picking up trifles by the way. Returned to Pegli, after the troubles, the sapient couple formed a herbarium, wherein they cultivated all sorts and kinds of medicinal and hygienic plants, and, further, committed to pen and paper treatises and recipes of great humanitarian value. Signora Clelia's researches gathered together also rare specimens from distant lands—habitants of China, Hindostan, Persia, Egypt and even from far-off Mexico, Peru and Chili. The villa assumed the appearance of a museum of botany, and the Signora gave to it the circumstance of a university, for, at stated periods, she delivered lectures and arranged exhibitions of the objects of her scientific hobby.

Apparently Signore Guiseppe Grimaldi predeceased his learned and amiable spouse, for his death threw a shadow across her path which threatened to dim the effulgency of her example. In 1832 the widowed Signora executed her will, by which she bequeathed to the Biblioteca Civica, now Beriana, in the Piazza Differari, the whole of her collection of pressed specimens and her manuscripts and books : of the former there are upwards of five thousand,

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of the latter five hundred. Signora Clelia Grimaldi died in 1837, and her memory is perpetuated by the two elementary schools in the secularised Convent di San Silvestro, which bear her name. Andrea Golinelli, in his "*Glorie Ligurie*," speaks of her as an "ornament of the country—one of the most significant flowers of the garland of Italian renown."

. . . . .

From serious studies in the Val Polcevera we wend our flight to the Val Bisagno—from east to west—and find ourselves once more in the gay scenes of life. At the Villa Doria, in the Val di Bisagno, was a trysting place of Signora Minetta, fair and frail, who loved another than her husband, Signore Bernabo. Polo di Fornari, scion of an ancient house—one of the twenty-eight—was the most fascinating "dangler" in Genoa; well made was he, good-looking and always dressed in the height of fashion, although he professed usually to be very much out of elbows so far as his purse was concerned. He and the Signora—his padrona—knew each other in the stiff circles of the palace, where they apparently observed scrupulously all the conventions of morality and religion, but their intimacy was unchecked and uncensored in the arbours and boudoirs of the villa. Signora Minetta gave her lover her best ruby ring as a *gâge d'amour*, and cleverly contrived to keep



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Signore Bernabo out of the way in Genoa. This did not represent the full *rôle* of the false madonna, she had still another lover—and indeed she probably had a dozen—one Niccolino Spinola, a mere lad but lusty. Polo and Niccolino, by the Signora's inadvertence, met unawares at the same rendezvous, and rapiers flashed in the glow of the afternoon sun. Minetta pretended to be dreadfully shocked at the death of poor young Spinola, whilst Polo di Fornari fled to France. A little later Signore Bernabo died, and the widow—to adapt an amusing quotation—"incontinently married," not "the barber"—the baker—Fornaro, but another. Those plumed trees and that velvet grass could tell tales had they speech !

A refrain of Lodovico Ariosto, the graceful poet-laureate of Ferrara, must have been inspired by a visit to one of the delightful villa gardens of Genoa :

“ . . . O torri, O celle,  
O donne, O cavalieri,  
O giardini, O palagi ! A voi pensando.  
Su mille vane amenità si perde  
La mente mia.”<sup>1</sup>

Well, we may also cast ourselves down, meta-

<sup>1</sup> “ . . . O villas, O grottoes,  
O fair dames, O gay cavaliers,  
O gardens, O palaces ! My mind  
Delightfully loses itself when I contemplate  
Your thousand amenities.”

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phorically, upon some grassy knoll graciously shaded from the too ardent sunbeams : our eyes fascinated by the beautiful objects around us, our ears charmed by the pleasant sounds of Nature's orchestra, our nostrils filled with delicious floral aromas, our tongues, too, gratified by luscious fruit and sparkling wine, and our hands and bodies grasping and touching with exquisite delight beings and things made for love and satisfaction ! We are in the dreamland of "*Genova la Superba*"—" *Genova l'Amorosa* "—" *Genova l'Indulgenta !* "

### III

The "*Cicisbeo*"—"Dangler," or gallant companion—was, of course, not peculiar to Liguria : his prototype was to be seen in Spain, Sicily, Greece and, generally, in the Levant. He was, however, emphatically *sui generis* in Genoa, where his personality and attributes so perfectly fitted into the scheme of social morality. He was not a lover exactly, nor was he merely a friend : his qualifications were negative, and he had nothing of the bold effrontery of a courtesan. Physically he was an adolescent Adonis, a budding Apollo, and there was absolutely nothing sordid or repulsive about his person or his character.

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The close preoccupation of the men of Genoa in private business and public duty and their intense thirst and search for money, together with their sensual self-indulgence, their distaste for artistic refinement and culture, and their irregular ideas of marital responsibility, left their womenfolk, to whom they gave their names and the presidency of their households, very much to themselves, with no interest in the world around, and no healthy occupation. This was absolutely incompatible with the true practice of connubial fidelity : declension on both sides was inevitable.

A Genoese noble or merchant generally chose as his wife a woman much his junior ; this, in itself, was an ill-omened condition. He regarded her as an ornament and plaything, and she looked upon her spouse as a fossil and a bore, and sought the companionship of men of her own age and range. Barretti, in his " *Relazione degli Usi e Costume d'Italia*," speaking of this feature of Genoese society, puts into the mouth of Paolo Giovio this axiom : " Is a girl married, then she ought to have an Adonis to court her to the church, to amuse her in town, to whisper in her ear at assemblies." The *cicisbeo* was expected also to accompany his *padrona* to her villa, where he assumed the privileges, if not the position, of the lord and master, and he had his own apartment and his slave valet.

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Another quaint writer, Francesco Lando, says : “ The women of Genoa were naturally frail, insinuating, complaisant, credulous, and gossipy. Their veils, their fans, their balconies, and their sedan-chairs provided them with endless opportunities for the exhibition of personal charms and secret curiosity, and invited in return gallantries and compromises.” Where speech was unwise a look, a sigh, or the flutter of drapery, with the language of the fan, were tokens of accessibility and assignation. Young boys were encouraged to render the homage of a kissed hand to pretty girls and attractive women. Well-made and gallant-mannered youths were welcomed in every circle, first as playthings, then as go-betweens, then, perchance, as lovers—they were jokingly called “ *Bracciuoli* ”—“ Elbow-props ! ” The Doge’s State Page was an ideal “ dangler ”—in and out of his lady’s boudoir as often as in and out of his lord’s parlour. At his installation his Serenity kissed, as was the ceremonious custom, each of the *gentildonne* present upon both cheeks, and his well-set-up young page-esquire found ready opportunities for surreptitious embraces of the pretty girls, which were very much to their liking, we may be sure !

Married men welcomed cordially the attentions paid by eligible young fellows to their wives—they were relieved of duties which em-



“DANGLER”—PAGE OF HIS SERENITY  
THE DOGE OF GENOA.

AFTER A WOODCUT, 1617.



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barrassed them. Indeed it was quite a common practice in Genoa for middle-aged nobles and citizens to advertise at the Banco di San Giorgio and in the colonnades of the Piazza de' Banchi for good-looking, well-connected, accomplished and gallant young men to be in attendance at their palaces and their villas. As the bearer in public progress of his lady's gloves, her fan, her bouquet, her purse, her tablets, her puff, her pocket-handkerchief, and even of her long-haired pet spaniel, the *bracciuolo* was invaluable. In moments of retirement the skilful twang of strings—guitar and mandolin—and the dulcet notes of a pure young tenor voice, with the melodiously intoned recitation of sonnet and gossip, wiled away pleasantly many a lengthy siesta in the boudoir.

From one point of view, at least, the *cicisbeo* was the safe guardian of his padrona's honour ; the taller, bolder and more manly he was the less confidently would men feared by her lord approach her. She could also, if occasion arose, play her "dangler" against an undesirable liaison or an unbearable boredom. Whilst the wife's honour was usually safe, the daughter of the house might specially come within the zone of danger ; but the worthy Signore considered, with characteristic shrewdness, that, if a child born in the house was not his own, it was his wife's or his daughter's, and therefore he fathered it officially.

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Moreover, the *cicisbeo* was a certain preventative of domestic tragedy, for it was discovered that the further his vogue extended the fewer were the acts of personal violence and revenge—this is confirmed by public records. By saving women, unnaturally restrained, as were the Genoese, from the insipidity of married life, it checked the secret poisoning or assassination of incompatible or contemptible spouses ; whilst, on the other hand, it very greatly diminished the risk of wanton acts of jealousy and outbursts of unreasoning temper on the part of negligent and cruel husbands.

The “*Cicisbeotura*” combined the chivalry of northern comradeship with the sensuality of southern companionship, and nowhere was this so fortuitously exhibited as in Genoa. The *sposo* and the *cicisbeo* lived upon the friendliest of terms—almost like elder and younger brothers—the former trusted and admired the gallant “elbow-prop,” and the youth respected and flattered the older man. The system, as involved in Genoa, was admirable on the whole, for it eliminated the scandalous *rôle* of the courtesan as openly proclaimed in Venice and tacitly condoned in Florence.

. . . . .  
With respect to marriage, in Genoa there were many quaint customs and charming observances. “*La Pragmatica*,” of 1511 ordered



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that young girls should, in public, be accompanied by a lady of "*età-senele*"—certain age. This was probably to safeguard proprieties in the fashionable intercourse of the sexes, in gardens and *trattoria*, where refreshments and other delights were partaken of together. Upon balconies, where the good chaperons had places, the old ladies ran constant risks of smart blows on the head from Love's weighty missive-missiles, cast up at young *gentildonne* by energetic admirers. It was the custom for the ladies of the household to sit dressed in the height of fashion for two hours before sundown, daily, in the windows, or up on the balconies, of their houses, and thence to carry on conversation with passers-by. These were often Love's opportunities, for a slim courtier could hide from the chaperon below the stone ledge, or beside the lintel, and grasp momentarily the extended hand of his *innamorata*, or whisper in her ear, as she bent to tie her shoe, the tender words he had prepared.

The *décolletage* had to be buttoned up so as to hide the "*il pomo d'Adammo*" in the throat, which was considered an unsightly feature in female beauty. Veils were usually cast aside, and on the head were worn feathers and ribbon bows, and usually a spray of fresh natural flowers. The dressing of the hair in Genoa caused nothing like the care and trouble it did

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in Venice. The women did not bleach their locks, for golden hair was not favoured by the darker complexioned beauties of Liguria. They combed their tresses well out—light bay-brown was the favoured shade, in spite of the scoffs of Titian and his peers. Then a mass of small rippling curls was arranged under and over frisettes, drawn through jewelled combs, or into a chignon under a gemmed cap or diadem—leaving lovelocks around the high temples and at the ears. This was a very becoming coiffure, as may be seen in the portraits of the Marchese Annetta Grimaldi and Giovanna Cattaneo.

“*La Traduccio*” was an essential feature in all nuptial arrangements—the entrance of a newly married woman into her husband’s house. This was preceded by the erection of the barricade before the house door of the *fiancée*, which the groom-elect was required to scale, break down or burn. Behind it, ready for her rape, she stood, among her young companions, dressed, as she was, all in white, and covered with their white *mezzare*. Assured by a thrown kiss the athletic youth seized his bride, gently tossed her over his shoulder or bore her smiling upon his breast, and so passed through the débris at the door; accompanied by his comrades making strident music and raucous cries—he bore his blushing, sometimes very heavy, burden perspiringly into his own house, and placed her

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upon a chair of estate. A folk-song of Liguria has :

“ A le done de la spozaa,  
Questa letera sea daa.  
Ve faro sta tanto alegrete,  
Che lo cor ve fara galete.”

Then the bride was taken round and introduced to each person in the company, who paid her pretty compliments, and generally placed in her hand some useful domestic article—towards the housekeeping. Two glasses were filled with sweet wine—one red, one white—each stirred with laurel leaf for luck, which, the bride and groom, standing in the centre of the room, exchanged, pledged each other, and drained. Each then ate a flat, round, plain meal cake spread with musk conserve or other sweetie. The same refreshments were served to the company, each of whom took home a cake and a piece of bride's *mezzara*.

Before their departure the new Signora retired to the nuptial chamber, where the two eldest ladies of her acquaintance removed the bridal dress and clothed her in the day gown of a married woman, placing at the same time the matron's *pezzotto* upon her head. Thus attired she took her place by her husband's side, at the entrance to the house, to receive the parting salutations of their friends.

From 1441 to 1551—one hundred years or

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so—the cost of the marriage trousseau was fixed by statute at one-fifth of the dowry, but in no case was it to exceed five hundred ducats. During the first year of married life the wife was not permitted to receive more than one extra dress, and, if of velvet, it was required to be red or purple. So far as jewels were concerned, the wealth of the bridal *parure* was permitted for use in public for three months, and then pearls only were allowed at functions till the year ran out. Pearls were worn in the form of necklets, which were not allowed to exceed in value two hundred ducats each. A very hideous fashion prevailed in the fourteenth century, certainly of African origin: married women dyed their teeth black and their lips and eyebrows green! Courtesans added other disfiguring notes—green stockings and green gloves to their toilette—and wore miniature Venetian *zilver* or high boots; but the flamboyant Venetian paramour had no place in the secret amours of the Genoese.

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Naturally in a community remarkable for so many oriental customs, slaves occupied important positions. They were generally indispensable where false ideas of freedom and independence pervaded all ranks of society. The right to work is an ideal of all republican institutions, but in reality no one resents employment so much as a socialist: he prefers

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to stand by prating and to watch others working, so it was in Genoa. The "*Cassacie*," or Crafts, filled workshops and manufactories with alien operatives brought from Levantine and Black Sea ports. The earliest record of a slave-sale at Genoa is in 1245, when a Saracen girl of eighteen passed to her Genoese master for a sum of two hundred and seventy pounds—perhaps twenty-five pounds English. This was a very high price, as slaves went, for, in 1389, a woman slave of thirty cost ninety-five pounds and a younger woman only fifty pounds. A Circassian girl of twenty-five went at public auction for seventy-five pounds. The Circassians were much in favour for their good looks, fine physique and high spirits, but they had an evil reputation: "My slave is a Circassian and therefore vicious!" was a common remark.

In 1468 there were one thousand five hundred and twenty-eight female slaves in Genoa to sixty-three men and boys: this preponderance points the moral of the ethics of slavery in Liguria. The lot of a slave was far worse than in Venice: slaves were usually miserably housed, under-fed, badly clothed, and were liable to be beaten by their masters. Many a poor creature's body was a mass of wounds and wales: there were no legal enactments for their protection from harsh treatment. No master or mistress might marry a slave, or one redeemed from

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slavery, but such dependants were allowed to marry among themselves, on the understanding that the issue of the marriage was the unchallenged property of the master. Slaves could by law inherit bequests of their masters or mistresses, but, at the same time, they were willed like any other property. If a slave girl was ravished by anyone else than her master she could recover in court—if a white woman, three hundred pounds Genoese, or, if black, two hundred and fifty. In spite of hard rules slaves prospered and increased greatly in Liguria, and proved faithful in service and thrifty as small proprietors. Young negro boys were always in request as nursery pets, or as the promenade pages of their mistresses : coloured servants were very generally employed in all the palaces and villas. Slavery was abolished in Genoa at the end of the sixteenth century.

The solidarity, independence and egoism—which are still so significant in the character of the Genoese of to-day—caused unfavourable criticism from outsiders. Certainly, a selfish man or woman, one who lives only for self, is an object for scorn and dislike, but there is a good deal to be said for the maxim : “Charity begins at home.” Alfieri was much too severe, as was Dante, in his estimate of the Genoese. Nevertheless, the splenetic trio, in his Sonnet 76, has in it the sting of conviction :

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“ Tue ricchezze non spese, eppur corrotte,  
Fan d'ignoranza un denso velo agli uni,  
Superstizion tien gli altri ; a tutte é notte.” <sup>1</sup>

### IV

The religious instinct, ever conspicuous in the characters of the people of Liguria, as indeed throughout Europe, in the era of the Renaissance, guided Genoese of every class and degree at all periods in their history. At times perhaps dull and restrained in exercise by fateful but transitory circumstances, it generally urged men and women to noble acts of Christian piety. Genoa did not come behind Venice in the number and affluence of her religious establishments, nor yet in the devotion and self-sacrifice of her more worthy nobles and citizens. The family roll of almost every house contains names of venerable and saintly personages—as often as not *gentil-donne*. Upon every eminence, near and far, around the “ Proud City ” are monastic buildings, or their ruins, testifying to the piety and munificence of the forebears of the present Genoese. Above Varagine was the Badia di Tileto, patronised by the Della Volta, Doria and Cattanei ; Saint Columban's cell at Bobbia, above Trebbia, with the dependency of San Niccolo del Bos-

<sup>1</sup> “ Riches thou usest but for corruption.  
Ignorance, like a thick-veil, hast then wrapp'd  
Around Superstition, and all is dark.”

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chetto, in the Val di Polcevera, was protected by the Fieschi and Grimaldi.

Very many holy women renounced the ties of family life and retired from carnal delights to devote themselves unreservedly to religion. In the sixteenth century La Beata Maria Vittoria Fornari-Strata—by way of making amends for the worldliness and immorality of such kinsfolk as Polo de' Fornari—founded a convent for the nuns of the Santissima Nunziata. La Venerabila Suor (Sister) Giovanna Maria Battista Solimane gave all her substance, and herself, towards the foundation and maintenance of the Convent of the Solitary Nuns of San Giovanni Battista, and for the support of the Society of Christian Missionaries connected with the Monastery of San Giovanni Battista di Pré—one of Genoa's earliest shrines. The good Sister's benefaction was by way of reparation for the terrible revenge of Pope Urban VI., in 1386, when the eight cardinals whom he had brought, with sundry bishops, from Lucera as prisoners for plotting to restrict the temporal power, were delivered over to the fury of a fanatical mob and were cruelly tortured upon the rack. Some were thrown into the sea in sacks, and some were buried in dungeons hard by: Bishop Adam of London, upon the intervention of King Richard II., alone escaped the terrors.



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La Beata Virginia Centurione-Bracelli was the foundress, in the seventeenth century, of the Convent of Santa Maria de' Brignoli. This dedication points to a noble house famous in artistic patronage, benevolent enterprise and religious fervour. La Venerabila Battistina Vernazza was a thoroughly typical *gentildonna* of Genoa in the call of religion. She was born on 15th April 1497 in the Salita di San Bartolommeo degli Armeni. Her parents were Messir Ettore and Madonna Riccia Vernazza: he was a simple notary by profession, but his acts of benevolence raised him to a very noble place in the "*Libro d'Oro de' Benemeriti*" of Genoa. At a very tender age young Battistina exhibited remarkable docility and piety. Very quickly she picked up the elementals of education and evinced talents as a Latinist and as a poetaster. She had no fondness however for childish games but delighted in Church functions and observances. Padre Gaspare Scotto, her principal teacher, encouraged this ascetic predilection, and, upon the girl's thirteenth birthday, with her parents' consent, he dedicated her to "Sua Maestà la Vergine di Nazaretto," and at the following *fiesta* of San Giovanni Battista she was admitted a novice at the Convento delle Grazie. She, however, declined to be cloistered until both her parents gave their consent, and this Madonna Riccia withheld. Upon her death

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Suor Battistina entered the convent finally, and shut out the world, save only to receive four times a year a visit from her devoted and pious father.

Years passed and the holy nun displayed not alone singular fidelity to the strict routine of the convent, but she took up the defence of the Catholic religion against attacks of sectaries. With this object in view she studied and paraphrased the Holy Scriptures so thoroughly that her treatises have been handed down as precious depositories of the faith. At thirty years of age Suor Battistina was chosen Badessa of the convent, and this position gave her greater facilities for usefulness in the field of apologetics. Letters of hers, of the year 1528, to well-known protagonists are extant. Strenuous controversy engrossed the learned Abbess for many a long year. Her father's patrimony came to her, in default of brothers, but she applied it all to works of charity—especially in the direction of the rescue of young girls from evil associations and the support of the missionary activities of her community. Badessa Battistina lived on and on to a green old age and she all but reached her century before the keen scythe of Death swept over the convent garden and cut down its most fragrant full-blown rose. She died 9th May 1587, and her body was buried in a modest grave within the convent cemetery.

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She is still remembered in Genoa, for, in the Salita degli Armeni, where she was born, the municipal school for girls bears the name of "Battistina Vernazza."

It was during the life of this holy Abbess that a singular miracle was witnessed at the neighbouring Church of Santa Maria del Castello. The story is as follows :—A noble of the family of Pinelli—one of the twenty-eight "*Alberghi*"—Agostino by name, who, in 1555, was chosen Doge—loved a maiden inferior to himself in rank, but virtuous and of a respectable citizen family. It was sought to break off the intimacy in order that the young man might marry a woman he did not care for, but who was a wealthy heiress—a Vivaldi. The couple—Agostino and Paolina—met before the altar of the church and there informally exchanged Love's promises. After a time Agostino Pinelli was induced to break his word with Paolina, but she was by no means willing to release him. Her persistence greatly annoyed him, as he had been affianced to Giovanna Vivaldi. Chancing one day to meet Agostino in the piazza of the church Paolina ran and held his arm. Shaking her off, he denounced her, and, when she reminded him of his promise, but one short year before, he called her a liar and dared her to prove what she affirmed. The contention naturally drew together a curious crowd. Paolina demanded that he should ac-

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company her into the church and stand where they had stood a year before, and by the insistence of the assemblage he was compelled to agree to the proposal.

Kneeling tearfully before the high altar, Paolina prayed to Christ and Saint Mary for help, and then, to her amazement, and to the great wonder of the onlookers, the head of the Crucifix quite unmistakably bowed three times ! This miraculous sign was taken by all as a token that the girl's tale was true. Agostino could not refuse such a striking vindication of Paolina's constancy, and then and there he clasped her in his arms, and joined his prayers to hers for the assistance and blessing of heaven. The story ends somewhat abruptly by saying : " they were married on the same spot within a month."

This tale of the " nodding Crucifix " is still treasured in the minds of all Genoese girls and women. Should anyone be slighted by her lover she goes at once and kneels before the Holy Figure, tells her trouble, and looks for a consolatory nod. Whether any maiden criss-crossed in love has had Paolina Pinelli's fortunate experience no one has recorded.

Some eighty years after this scene in Santa Maria di Castello on 25th March—Ladyday—1626, splendid ceremonies were performed in every church in Genoa. At San Lorenzo, Car-



YOUTH AND BEAUTY AT PLAY  
IN A VILLA GARDEN.

AFTER A STIPPLE ENGRAVING.

T. Stothard, R.A.—Augusto Fox.



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dinal Giovanni Domenico Spinola celebrated Pontifical High Mass in the presence of the Doge, Francesco Brignole, and all the quality of Genoa. Among them was a Brignole bride, Signorina Caterina, the Doge's niece, who married Prince Onorio III. of Monaco. At the conclusion of the sacred function his Serenity humbly approached the Cardinal, and offered him, upon a golden salver, for dedication, a gold and jewelled sceptre, a Royal crown of gold and gems, and two magnificent golden keys. These precious objects were deposited upon the altar, above which stood a very beautifully chiselled and painted statue of the Mother of Christ, most gorgeously apparelled in cloth-of-gold and covered with jewels. At the same time, the Chancellor of the State proclaimed to the great mass of citizens, gathered in front of the cathedral, that Saint Mary the Virgin was there and then fully acknowledged as the "Queen and Sovereign of Genoa." Amid the reverent vociferations of the multitude the great doors opened, and there appeared the Doge and the Cardinal with their attendants, and there, in the sight of all the people, his Eminence placed upon the head of Francesco Brignole the Royal diadem, and put in his hands the Royal sceptre, together with the city's golden keys as signs that the Doge was the vicar in things temporal, in Genoa, of the Blessed Queen of

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Heaven. Thenceforward the Doge's title was "*Serenissimo*," and the Palazzo del Consiglio was renamed Palazzo Reale. This was one of Genoa's characteristic pageants—characteristic enough, for, whilst seeming to ascribe honour to Saint Mary, it actually bestowed distinction upon the Chief Magistrate of the Republic—this was essentially the way of the Genoese !

Thomas Gray, the traveller, in his "*Travels*," describes a Church festival which he witnessed in 1741: "We resorted," he writes, "to-day to the Church of Santa Maria delle Vigne to put up our prayers. We found Our Lady dressed out with a crown of diamonds upon her head, another upon the Child, and a constellation of lights burning before them. Shortly after came the Doge, in his robes of crimson damask and a cap of the same, followed by the Senators in black. He was a very tall, lean, and stately old gentleman, called Constantino Balbi: the Senators were made on the same model. They said their prayers and heard a white friar preach with much devotion. Then we went to Santa Annunciata, a church built by the family of Lomellini and belonging to them, which is indeed a most sumptuous structure. Then to the Palazzo Doria, all black and white marble outside but somewhat poorly furnished. The finest thing was a great embossed silver table with the story of Andrea



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Doria's victories at sea. The old-fashioned red velvet chair and the curious Gothic tapestry there were used at the State reception of the Emperor Charles V."

The veneer of rectitude was at times the thinnest of the thin, for it was considered far more heinous to transgress dietary precepts of the Church than to commit flagrant crimes against nature and morality. "Dio me ne lidere!" with marks of abhorrence always greeted the proffer of, say, a pigeon for dinner on Saturday, whilst a shrug of the shoulders, and perhaps the "fig thrown out," greeted a tale of debauchery and crime.

. . . . .

Women in every age and land are prone much more than men to works of mercy and religion; of such surely was "The crown of daughters of Genoa"—so called by many writers. Benedettina Grimaldi, "chaste, self-denying, amiable, charitable, moderate in dress, and personal pleasures," a munificent patroness of the great Ospedale di Pammatone, nursed patients suffering from plague and leprosy and endowed beds for their treatment and alleviation; Argentina, daughter of Signore Opicio Spinola, and wife of the Marchese di Monferrato: Violanta, daughter of Signore Gianandrea Doria; and Isabella, daughter of Signore Luca Fiesco, and wife of Luchino, Prince of Milan; were con-

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temporaries in the beneficent field of charity. Devoted to the offices of religion they proved the sincerity of their faith by their eleemosynary services to sick and dying men and women in prison and to debased mariners in port. Benevolent institutions were founded and endowed, under the style of "*Le Donne di Misericordia*," in 1478 and in 1497, "*La Compagnia del Mantiletto*—"Wearers of the Veil," by the munificence of noble-hearted women. All these threw open to the suffering objects of their regard the healthful pleasure-grounds of their villas, and it was no rare sight to find a lady, fashionably attired, seated under the colonnade of a temple, or beneath a shady tree, talking to and cheering poor and friendless sufferers.

One of the most commanding, and at the same time most useful, edifices and institutions in Genoa is the Albergo de' Poveri, beautifully situated above the Church of the Annunciation. In 1560 Signore Emanuele Brignole conceived the idea of gathering under one roof the inmates of small refuges scattered throughout Genoa—each failing, through inadequacy of means or accommodation, to relieve satisfactorily the pitiable objects of misfortune who roved through the streets crying out "Poveri! Poveri!" Four years of careful preparation found the benevolent Signore's project realised, when the Archbishop Ercole Brignole, his brother,

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solemnly blessed the new building, and him, the founder of the charity. The original foundation has been vastly increased as time has swept over Genoa, and many noble families have added their "golden brick" to the Institution—the present building dates from 1665. It accommodates to-day fifteen hundred inmates of both sexes, who are employed in the manufacture of "*bordati*"—a mixture of woollen and cotton cloth—furniture, embroidery, mosaics, and in other useful crafts.

A very curious feature in the interior of the building is the collection of statues, busts and medallions of founders and benefactors. They are executed in a variety of materials, but are characterised by their distinct personality. All the great families are there: Doria, Spinola, Fieschi, Grimaldi, Durazzi, Pallavicini, and many others, and, of course, the Brignoli. Whether the sculptors, or their patrons, had in mind the unique collection of Genoese merchant-princes at the Banco di San Giorgio, with their appreciable gradations of munificence, one cannot say, but this array of benevolent Genoese of both sexes is quite as extraordinary in its way. Every figure is "in great" or "in little," as its original gave much or little to the Albergo. All have cornucopias, caskets, pouches or hands full of coins. Some hold wide-gaping sacks or bags, some present dishes and baskets, whilst

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others simply extend a few ducats towards the passer-by, as though they represented all that they could afford. Among them is the statue of the benevolent Marchesa Settemia Gentile, the wife of Marchese Stefano Pallavicino, who died in 1758. She has, perhaps, the largest sack of ducats of them all. She is dressed in the French fashion *à la Watteau*, with a coquettish cap on her head and many rings on her fingers. Unhappily, if the features and figure are after life, then, all we can say is, the generous Marchioness was no beauty! *Sic gloria mundi!* Probably this series of statue-portraits of *gentildonne* gave the lead to the extraordinary monuments in the modern Campo Santo—an open-air gallery of fashions in a cemetery, in stone!

The ladies of the Brignole-Sale family were always conspicuous for their devotion to the cause of suffering. Marchese Geronima and Paola, whose portraits were so splendidly painted by Anthony Vandyck at Genoa in his gallery of Genoese *gentildonne*, were fascinating visitors and kindly benefactresses when daughter followed mother along the path of human sympathy from their magnificent palace in the Strada Nuova—now the Palazza Rosso, with its superb contents, worth, it was said in 1874, four million lire—up the steep *salita* to the great Albergo de' Poveri, with its beautiful gardens full of waving palms and flowering shrubs.

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The frou-frou of their skirts, the glitter of their jewels, and the brightness of their smiles brought relief and joy into the lives of many an unfortunate man and woman, as they swept fragrantly through the wards, or stopped to bestow a flower, a coin, or a souvenir upon this or that grateful recipient. Ducessa Maria Defferrari-Galliera, the heiress of the Brignole-Sale family, one of the most munificent of all the munificent benefactresses of Genoa, gave, in 1878, the Palazzo Rosso, and also, in 1889, the Palazzo Bianco, opposite, to the Municipality. Before the Ducessa married the Duke she was, as Marchesa Maria Brignole-Sale, well known for her charitable proclivities. With her active assistance also the noble groups of model dwellings for working people were erected—*L'Opera Pia, Defferrari-Galliera*.

. . . . .

The art of painting, as displayed in the Genoese palaces, was almost an exotic in Genoa, for very few local artists rose to real eminence. There never was in Genoa a School of Painting nor a Public Gallery of Pictures. The names, if little else, of a few women artists have been preserved, but only one or two achieved distinction: Angiola Airola, Canoness of the Convento di San Bartolomeo dell' Olivetto, and a pupil of Domenico Fiasella, painted frescoes in several churches. She also wrote treatises on

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mystic subjects. La Venerabila Suor Tommasa Fiesca—sister of Saint Caterina Fiesca-Adorno—born in 1448, was a painter of religious pictures in the Convento delle Religiose Domenicane di SS. Giacomo Filippo. She died in 1534, and her body was some years later translated—along with eleven other religious—to the cemetery at San Silvestro. Maria Vittoria Cossana, sister of Giovanni Francesca Cossana—a painter of repute—who was born at the village of Bonasola near Levanto, on the Riviera di Levante, painted sacred subjects and portraits. She died in Venice in 1741. Angiola and Teresa, sisters of Carlo Antonio Tavella—from whom they received their training—were employed in fresco painting at the Church of Sant' Agnese di Montpulciano in Tuscany. The painters of Genoa were not without their romances. One of them, the name is unimportant, created a novel fashion in clothes. Being in love with the wife of a merchant—his patron—he painted a great cloak in which to conceal himself on his way to her boudoir, one side white, so as not to be too conspicuous by day, the other side black for use after dark !

The best-known Genoese woman painter was Sofonisba Angosciola-Lomellini. She was a daughter of Messir Amilcare Angosciola and Madonna Bianca Ponzone, of Cremona, who settled at Genoa at the end of the sixteenth century. She had three sisters, Europa, Anna

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and Luccia. At first she evinced a talent for music, but gave that up for painting. Her *métier* was in the direction of flower painting and portraits. The Duke of Alba, when at Genoa, with the Emperor Charles V., saw her work, and, noting its excellence, introduced her to Prince Filippo, afterwards Philip II. of Spain. He invited her to Madrid and endowed her with a pension of two hundred ducats. Her votive paintings of saints for churches was approved by the Pope, who sent his blessing, together with a fine cross of rubies. Sofonisba married in Madrid a Spanish noble, Don Fabrizio di Moncada, a feudatory of Sicily, who gave her father twelve thousand ducats by way of dowry, and then carried her off to Palermo where he shortly died. The widow returned to Madrid in a Genoese ship commanded by Capitano Orazio Lomellino, who fell in love with his interesting passenger and married her. With him she sailed back to Genoa, where she established a *salon* of painting. Her fame travelled far and she was invited to Vienna to give lessons in painting to the young Archduchesses. There Madonna Lomellina met Anthony Vandyck, who was so much struck by her personal charms, and by the excellence of her work, that he begged to be allowed to paint her portrait. A friendship sprang up between the two artists which lasted till Sofonisba Lomellina's death in 1624.

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She was then a very old woman, and spending the evening of her life in her husband's home at Genoa, who had predeceased her.

The portrait painted by the famous Flemish master has been lost, but in the Museo delle Belle Arti, in Palermo, there is a sketch-portrait of Madonna Lomellina by Vandyck, executed in 12th July 1624, a few months before her death. It is accompanied by notes in the master's writing, which relate that although "blind and old she took keen interest in all that concerned her art." It was said that she gave Vandyck much good advice, together with the details of her life. She once asserted that "If my arms were stronger, I could paint, blind as I am!" A quaint and scarcely intelligible, epitaph was cut upon her tombstone, now also destroyed :

" Que riceve una vita, e due ne dona  
Da lui che in lei sua chiara fama eterna."

Two municipal schools for girls, situated in Via Lomellini, near the Piazza Forsatella, in the disused Convento di San Filippo Neri, bear the dedication "*Alla Donna Maria Pellegrina Amoretti.*" Born at Oneglia, under the shadow of the ancestral home of Andrea Doria, in 1756, of inconspicuous parentage, this young girl very soon manifested classical talents, which led her to study closely Greek, Latin and philosophy, and, before she had attained



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the age of sixteen, she was an advanced disciple in the school of logic and metaphysics and an adept in public disputations. One such symposium was conducted in the presence of Maria Ferdinanda, Duchess of Savoy, afterwards first Queen of Sardinia. So impressed was her Royal Highness with the girl's ability that she undertook the cost of a scholastic sojourn at Pavia, where she surprised the professors by her marvellous memory and fertility of imagination. She gained the laurel wreath of Laws and the Doctor's gold ring, and, at the end of her course, the Senate bestowed upon its youthful *alumna* a gold fillet and a silver badge bearing the arms of the university.

Whilst at Pavia the accomplished maiden-doctor set out upon an entirely new line—poetasting, and, being touched, as her youth required, by the spirit of romantic love, she conceived an affection for one of her fellow-students, the son of poor Paviese parents. Cupid's bow was bent but his arrow failed of its mark, and—disappointed in the full tide of her renown—fickle Fortune caused her to retrace her steps to the Riviera. She was received at Oneglia with tumultuous honours and the municipality proffered her a dowry whereby she might wed the man of her choice. Love waited on opportunity but opportunity remained at home, and Dottora Maria Pellegrina resolved

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to put on one side what she subsequently called "Nature's weakness," and addressed herself anew to her studies in the interests of her neighbours. Remarkable for her simplicity of character, her amiability of temperament and her hearty sympathy for others less erudite than herself, she spent the residue of her life in good works and literary enterprises. Never in the enjoyment of robust health, she suffered greatly from attacks of fever to which at length she fell a victim, and died 15th October 1787. Her example has fired young girls everywhere along the Riviera : her life, her talents, her goodness, her success, all and each, making a powerful appeal.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RIVIERA—ROMANCES OF THE RIVIERA DI PONENTE

#### I

“ RIVIERA di Genova—il Paradiso d'Italia ! ”  
So sang enthusiastically Torquato Tasso, poet-laureate of a dozen Courts—most fortunate, irritable and capricious of men. He passed through Genoa and coasted along the Riviera di Ponente in the suite of Cardinal Luigi d'Este, who, in 1572, was accredited as Ferrarese Ambassador to the court of Charles IX. of France. The poet was then at the zenith of his fame, and he presumed to make love to the devout Princess Leonora d'Este, but, when she scorned his advances, the twinkle of another pair of maiden's eyes encouraged him to pay his court to her sister, Princess Lucrezia. She was a lovely girl and romantic, and devoted to poets and storytellers. For her he fought a bloodless duel with his rival poet, Battista Guarini, with whom the amorous royal damsel had shared her favours.

He was already familiar with the charms of the Riviera di Levante, and had scanned the

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boastful inscription over the castle gate at Lerici :

“ Scopa-bocca al Zenoese  
Crepacuore al Porto Venerese  
Streppa-borsello al Lucchese ! ” <sup>1</sup>

He feasted with the Fieschi at Rapallo and with the Grimaldi at Monaco. Picnics and rambles in the open, Troubadour romances within the castle halls, flirtations with maidens of the countryside, dances, songs and minstrelsy—amid scenes and sounds sublime and fragrant scent of flowers and trees—these were in his orders of the day. Tasso, whether he rambled up and down the steep pineclad spurs of the bold Apennines which encroach so brusquely upon the narrow rocky beach of the Riviera di Levante, or sauntered about the scented open glades and the smiling sea-coves of the less-encumbered Riviera di Ponente, breathed air redolent of poetry and caught echoes of sweet minstrelsy. If Provence was the fostering nursery of the Troubadours, Liguria was their happy playground, over which they danced and sang their way to all the cultured Courts of Italy. They loved “ Poetry, the outburst of human sentiment,” for their idea of love was just this, “ it yielded every happiness in human life.”

<sup>1</sup> “ Mouth-stopper for the Genoese,  
Heart-breaker for the Porto-Venerese  
Purse-grabber for the Lucchese ! ”



LA PRINCIPESSA ANNETTA GRIMALDI.

Frate Bernardo Strozzi.

PALAZZO PALLAVICINI-GRIMALDI.



## Riviera Romances

“ Love it is that makes me sing ! ” sang each gay fellow to himself.

“ A little wild bird at my ear  
Sings his sonnet sweetly clear,  
Others sing loudly, I do not hear.  
Singing loudly is by no means singing well,  
But truly by the song that's soft as bell  
The master-singer's voice is plain to tell.  
How few have it ! Masters yet are all,  
And all presume to utter what they call  
A ballad, canzonet or madrigal.”

So quaintly and gracefully a “ *Ballata Anonyma* ” of the thirteenth and fourteenth century warbles in concerted tones of Provençal baritone and Ligurian tenor. The Troubadour was gently born, no peasant or operative was he, gently nurtured by his mother's love to love all mankind and God, his cavalier sire his guide in chivalry and honour : the youth faced the world a courtly gentleman and knight-errant. The calling of the Troubadour was a costly one. His education, as a complete courtier, required its complement in tasteful dress and well-fitting armour. He carried alms for charity and coins for cards and dice. In winter-time he trained his limbs, his voice, his wit, in castle, courtyard and tilting ground ; the springtide found him hurrying off to test his mettle in foreign fields ; summer days and nights were filled with entertainments, tournaments and “ Courts of Love ” ; and autumn saw him back again with laurels

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and myrtles crowned, to claim his home-bred bride, or to introduce the bride he had won abroad to the lord and lady and the lieges of his land.

The Troubadour of circumstance travelled not alone—in his suite were *jongleurs*, in tight-fitting woven hose of silk and wool, with jaunty befeathered caps and gaily floating mantelettes of silk and fur—youthful companions or eligible servitors, who were skilled in the play of the tambourine, the cymbal, the citole, the mandola and the guitar. Some of these could throw, and deftly catch, little balls of dough and other soft yielding substance upon the points of their poniards : others were already past masters in the imitation of bird music and cries : and some played tricks with swords, baskets and hoops. Glee-maidens too trooped merrily and saucily along with the men, arrayed in blue and cherry-coloured short skirts, fringed and embroidered in silver. They wore green and scarlet stockings clocked with black chenille, and thin kid buskins to match. Across their gaily shawled shoulders they carried broad silk ribbons of many hues, for slinging their guitars and mandolins, when not in striking by nimble shapely fingers, beringed and braceletted in gold filigree.

The Troubadour and his retinue, often as not, followed hither and thither in the progresses of kings and knights of note : such an one was



## Riviera Romances

Geraud Requier de Narbonne, who accompanied Alfonso X. of Castile, in 1275. Richard Cœur de Lion had his Troubadour, as we know, the faithful, songful Blondel. *Servente*—the war song, *romanzo*—the song of peace, and *cappriccio* the lover's lament were the chief categories of the songs with which they swept the shores of the Mediterranean as with a gentle breeze, enkindling chivalry and inviting love. "Courts of Love" were established in the bowers of knightly castles, whence issued laws and rules which no Troubadour could gainsay: indeed he bowed unreservedly to their authority, as in duty bound, for their presidents were noble dames of high degree and their councillors were maidens fair and of fair repute. The greatest Dame-President of the "Courts of Love" was the far-famed haughty Countess Ermengarda of Narbonne. Her decision, once, in a "tenson," or dispute, was Solomonlike: "Can the greater affection and more loving attachment subsist between lovers or between married couples?" "The two," she judged, "are incomparable, yet both are supreme!" This added one more to the thirty "Laws of Love."

Every gay and beautiful noblewoman had her poet-champions and her "Court of Love." Prinzivalle Doria, banished his home in Genoa in 1250, took refuge in Naples and there gave himself up to the poetic Muse. He first sang

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sonnets in the vernacular of the home he loved so well, and then in the measures beloved in Provence and Languedoc he lauded Countess Beatrice de Provence—" *Présidente d'Amour* " in " The dainty Madness of Love ! " King Charles IV. of Naples dubbed his Genoese *litterato* " *Il mio Trovatore*," and gave him High Court Office. What Prinzivalle sang illuminated Giovanni Boccaccio—" a Troubadour of troubadours "—and prompted his most tender sonnet to his *innamorata*, Maria d'Aquino—" Fiammetta " :

“ And then I heard a song as glad as love,  
So sweet that never yet the like thereof  
Was heard in mortal company.  
A nymph, a goddess, or an angel sang,  
Unto herself within the chosen grove  
Of ancient loves. . . . ”

The Troubadours of Genoa and the Rivas, whose first patrons were the Marquises of Este and Monferrato and the Counts of San Bonifacio and Savoy, were brothers of those of Provence and Languedoc ; but their wandering and entertainments were not only in the Courts of Kings and Queens but in the entourage of affluent and munificent Genoese nobles and merchants. Marsilio Folchetto, at the end of the twelfth century, was the son of a Genoese trader settled at Marseilles. He was the first Troubadour of Genoa, “ of comely appearance and cultured

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erudition, he was a fitting ornament at Courts"; and he gained royal patronage—for no king visited Marseilles, or coasted along the littoral to Genoa, but "Folco"—as he was called currently—was enlisted for amusement and repose. Richard Cœur de Lion, Alfonso de Castile and Raymond de Toulouse all listened to his melodies and stories. To be sure he sang chiefly in the dialect of Liguria, but that heightened his renown—it was musical and soft. Presuming upon courtly favours the young Troubadour fell madly in love with the bewitching Adelaïda Roccamartina, wife of Barral del Balzo, Viscount of Marseilles. The inconstant dame encouraged the gay young Troubadour's advances, but instead of granting all the favours he sought she exposed him to her Lord! The Viscount, mad with rage, chased the lover of his wife out of, and beyond, his castle bounds, and shut up poor Adelaïda in a gloomy dungeon, where she died of love and grief, when scarce twenty years of age.

Barral, smitten with remorse, sent for Folco, of whom he asked a songful eulogy of his beloved: "*Lamentation de Barral*" voiced the widower's chagrin, and then the broken-hearted Troubadour renounced the world, the flesh and the devil, and sought pardon and peace in the cloister. After a time he went to Rome whence, as a Dominican preacher, he was sent to con-

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vert the fanatical Albigenses. Greatly honoured for his devotion and success, Folco was made Abbot of Torondet, and soon after, in 1205, consecrated Bishop of Toulouse: it was said of him "none sang the Mass so well." When he died in 1231 his wife, Alazia, and his two sons—the associates of his manhood—also renounced the things of this world and ended their days in religion, praying for his soul and theirs. Dante in "*Il Paradiso*," Canto XV., places Marsilio Folchetto among those who have repented their youthful excesses, and calls him "a lustrous jewel" and "a choicest ruby." Petrarch, too, was touched by the "Story of Folchetto and Adelaïde," and, in his "*Triumphus Cupidinis*," sings of:

"Folco, que ch'a Marsillia il nome a dato,  
Ed a Genoa totto, ad al extremo,  
Canzio per miglìoria patria, habito, e stato."

Many knight-errants and troubadour-jongleurs followed in the wake of Marsilio Folchetto, to and fro, between Liguria and Provence. Lanfranco Cicala was a lovelorn lad of Genoa, scion of a noble family, next in order to the original "*Alberghi*," far famed for strong Ghibelline propensities—they saw eye to eye with the Doria and Spinola. His time was that of fierce conflict for mastery between Frederic II., and Gregory IX. and all Liguria felt

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the impulse of the war fever. The Emperor incited the Riviera from Savona to Ventimiglia to revolt, and every Rivierese sword was ready to strike for home and fame. Minstrels found their way into the camps and villages where men lay on their arms, and their tuneful melodies and moving narratives soothed wild, lustful spirits. Cicala—and what a delightful name was his — “ *Cicala* ” — “ grasshopper ” — for a Troubadour!—travelled to Matuta or San Remo—a fief of the Doria and the Demari—and there he helped to establish a “ Court of Love,” before which he sang and spoke of “ Women, War and Wine,” all through two strenuous years — 1246–1248. His graceful sonnets still linger on the lips and move the hearts of men. “ The women of San Remo,” he said, “ are much more beautiful, and far better tempered, than those of Genoa.” “ They have frank blue eyes, and open countenances,” as Smollett wrote in 1765, “ and are as amorous as any I have ever come across.”

Two handsome lads followed Lanfranco Cicala, by boat and boot, from Genoa, to rendezvous at San Remo, with others of their ilk—Bonifacio Calvi and Bartolommeo Zorzio—Serra was his family name, but he chose to seek adventures under the inspiring name of the patron saint of Genoa—San Giorgio. By the way, it was a very common practice for Genoese lads and men

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to sink their patronymics, when engaged in liaison or intrigue, and rank themselves and their doings under the crimson white banner and name of the chivalrous saint of Cappadocia.

By the ruined hermitage of San Romola, where modest hepaticas and boastful orchids grow, on the rolling hills beyond Santa Maria della Costa, foregathered Arnaut Dancel, Pierre d'Alvernhé, and Giraut de Borinel from Provence; Giovanni Sordello and Giorgio Cadenazzi from Mantua—all named by Dante Alighieri. With Sordello travelled the frail Contessa Cunizza, harshly dealt with by her husband, Conte Riccardo di San Bonifacio. She was noted as a *prestidigitateuse* and foretold the defeat of Giacomo da Carrara by Can Grande da Vicenza in 1314, and the fate of Riccardo da Camino—murdered when at chess at Trevisa. Cunizza forsook Sordello and cohabited with a soldier of fortune, Braganzo, who was foully murdered by her brother, the tyrant Ezzolino da Romano, and then she fled to the banks of the Entella, the “*Fiumana bella*” of Dante, and ultimately—having again married and again divorced—she drifted into Genoa, and there died unknown and unhonoured. Dante, in his “*Paradiso*,” puts this valedictory word in her mouth :

“ And here I glitter, for that by its light  
This Star o’ercame me. Yet I naught repine,  
Nor grudge myself a higher sphere and place.”

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Calvi and Zorzio careered to Marseilles, accompanied by the glee-maidens they had fascinated at the San Remo "Court of Love," but, alas, there "the girls quarrelled with the men." Calvi fared to the Court of King Alfonso of Aragon, where he met another bewitching maid, the King's niece—Mercedes. Rivals stepping in, the enamoured pair fled to Castile and incited war between the two states, in the course of which Bonifacio Calvi fell and died a brave death, on the field of battle. Zorzio took ship to Sicily, when the quartet parted in ill blood at Marseilles, and, at Palermo, fell sick of putrid fever, and died sadly and alone.

The story of the loves of the Troubadours would fill a big library full of books ; and the hearts they healed and the hearts they broke "lie thick as the leaves in Vallombrosa." What Tasso wrote of Alcides, in the enchanted palace of Armida—the gardens of the Villetta di Negro, in Genoa—are applicable to the days of the Troubadours :

"So in the passing of a day doth pass,  
The bud and blossom of the life of man,  
Nor e'er doth flourish more, but like the grass  
Cut down, becometh withered, pale, and wan.  
Oh, gather then the rose while time thou hast,  
Short is the day, done when it scarce began,  
Pluck the red rose of love whilst yet thou mayst—  
Loving be loved—embracing be embraced."

# Heroines of Genoa

## II

Whether “ distance lends enchantment to the view,” or not, the older the romance the more romantic does it seem. Modern fact and fiction all suffer irredeemably from redundancy of detail, and most things which have happened modernly, say since the death of Queen Anne, are garish and profane in narrative and effects. Out of the mists of the fruitful past dream-stories take subtle forms, with an appeal which is perfectly irresistible, because there is so very much that is left untold—this is the true spirit of romance.

Well, ever so long ago, a thousand years at least, there was born to Piedmontese parents—who, or where, or when, no one exactly knows—a son : for, like Mary and Joseph of old, his parents were wayfarers, their faces towards Jerusalem. The place where the pious mother was taken, probably prematurely, in labour, bears, in the story, as told in “ *Les Origines Féodales*,” the name of “ Sezaduin ”—perhaps Aquæ Statiellæ of the Romans, now Acqui, upon the banks of the River Bormida in Piedmont. Rude but kindly villagers lent ready aid to mother and babe, whilst the father looked on and said his prayers. Her gratitude was unbounded, and, because she and her spouse were



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under strict vows to proceed direct to Palestine and not dawdle by the way, she confided her baby boy to the compassionate women's care. Mother and child never set eye on one another more : his parents both died in Syria, and of their sepulchre no man knoweth to this day.

"Aleramo," the priestly hermit from his cell by the river-side over against the ferry—perhaps a follower in practical devotion of Saint Christopher—called the little stranger at his baptism : he had no surname, his parents never divulged it. The story goes on to say that Aleramo was a beautiful boy, and grew big and strong ; and when he reached the precocious age of sixteen he was enrolled a soldier-levy in the Piedmontese contingent of the army of Otto III. The Emperor was in person directing the siege of Brescia, and there was young Aleramo drafted. In the Imperial camp was the Emperor's beauteous daughter, Adelasia, the namesake of her famous and saintly mother Adelaide. Aleramo saw Adelasia and she looked on Aleramo : the prelude of a new tournament of Prince Cupid ! It was May-time in the year 952, when the hawthorn smelt as sweetly as it does to-day, and when all the flowerets of love were springing out of the vernal grass, and pink and white apple-blossoms were shedding painted petals upon amorous white and yellow narcissi and wanton multi-coloured anemones.

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The first scene in the drama of Love's young dream reveals two fugitives, hastening anxiously along the well-worn Roman road betwixt Brescia and Cremona. He is a gallant young soldier and bears proudly his Emperor's cognisance for bravery: she, clad in princely raiment, is a mere child still, and timid in her bearing. Aleramo and Adelasia have braved Imperial and parental anger for the sake of the love they bear each other, and they are flying to conceal themselves for a while in the mountains of Liguria beyond Piacenza. Very soon what funds Aleramo had with him were spent and Adelasia's jewels fetched but little by forced sale, and they were face to face with poverty. For a while hunting in the forests provided food, and the rough wooden hut of a charcoal burner shelter. Goatherds treated the errant pair kindly, and Aleramo put his hand to unfamiliar work, and, with the coulter of the plough and the axe of the woodman in his hands, he earned a pittance for daily bread. News of the abduction was spread abroad and the fastnesses of the Val de Trebbia failed to hide the fugitives, so off they tramped—Adelasia with a child at her breast—and rested not until their feet were awash the slack tide of the deep blue Mediterranean. Along the beach they tramped but at Albenga they stopped their flight—a peaceful resting-place, well within Liguria

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and technically beyond the Imperial realm of Italy.

Four sons were born to Aleramo and Adelasia upon the Riviera, what time their father joined the rough calling of an agricultural labourer to that of a sturdy fisherman. The eldest boy, when a mere youth, was taken into the service of the Bishop of Albenga, to whom, in confidence, Aleramo confided his story. Soon after the bishop was summoned by the Pope to proceed to the Emperor's Court on important business, and he persuaded Aleramo to accompany him as chief sutler. Otto was in 967 besieging Brescia for the second time, and into Aleramo's pulse stole again the throb of battle ; so, once more assuming martial garb and weapons, he sallied forth to dare and do bravely for his liege lord. The Emperor very swiftly had intelligence of the hero's bravery—the first to breast the bastion-face and plant the Standard of the Double Eagle against all foes. He demanded his name and station, that he might bestow upon him some signal mark of favour. Then the bishop approached with Aleramo by his side, and they cast themselves humbly at Otto's feet ; and, whilst the latter confessed himself and pleaded for pardon for his love-rash escapade, the former besought the Emperor to recall his love for his dear child—whom he had long regarded as dead—to restore her to his favour and his

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arms, and to extend his Imperial clemency to her heroic husband.

The story of their loves and their lives—their privations, their fortitude and their loyalty—affected the Emperor greatly, and, extending his hand to his son-in-law, he raised him and kissed him affectionately upon the cheek. He ordered the bishop and Aleramo to return at once to Albenga and conduct the Princess Adelasia and her children thence to Verona, where resided the Empress Adelaide. The hero was created Marchese di Monferrato—a proud title and degree—endowed with a princely income, and into his charge and ultimate possession was given all the country between the Rivers Po and Orba in Piedmont, with the ambitious style “*Signore di Ligure*.”

Marchesa Adelasia unhappily did not very long survive her restoration and honours, but died at her husband's castle of Acqui, in the arms of her devoted mother, the Empress. Aleramo was not by her side, as he had been through the fifteen years of chequered fortune : he was away in Palestine, a pilgrim, and also commander of the Emperor's galleys on the lookout for Saracen marauders. News of his beloved wife's untimely death no doubt greatly saddened the heroic Marquis, but men are men before all, and the greatest soldiers are, as a rule, the fondest lovers. Aleramo gave only

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one short year to lamentation, and then in stately nuptials he wedded the daughter of another Emperor—Beranger II.—the beauteous Princess Gilberga. She was his for just one more term of fifteen years. She died in 986, and the Marquis was again a widower.

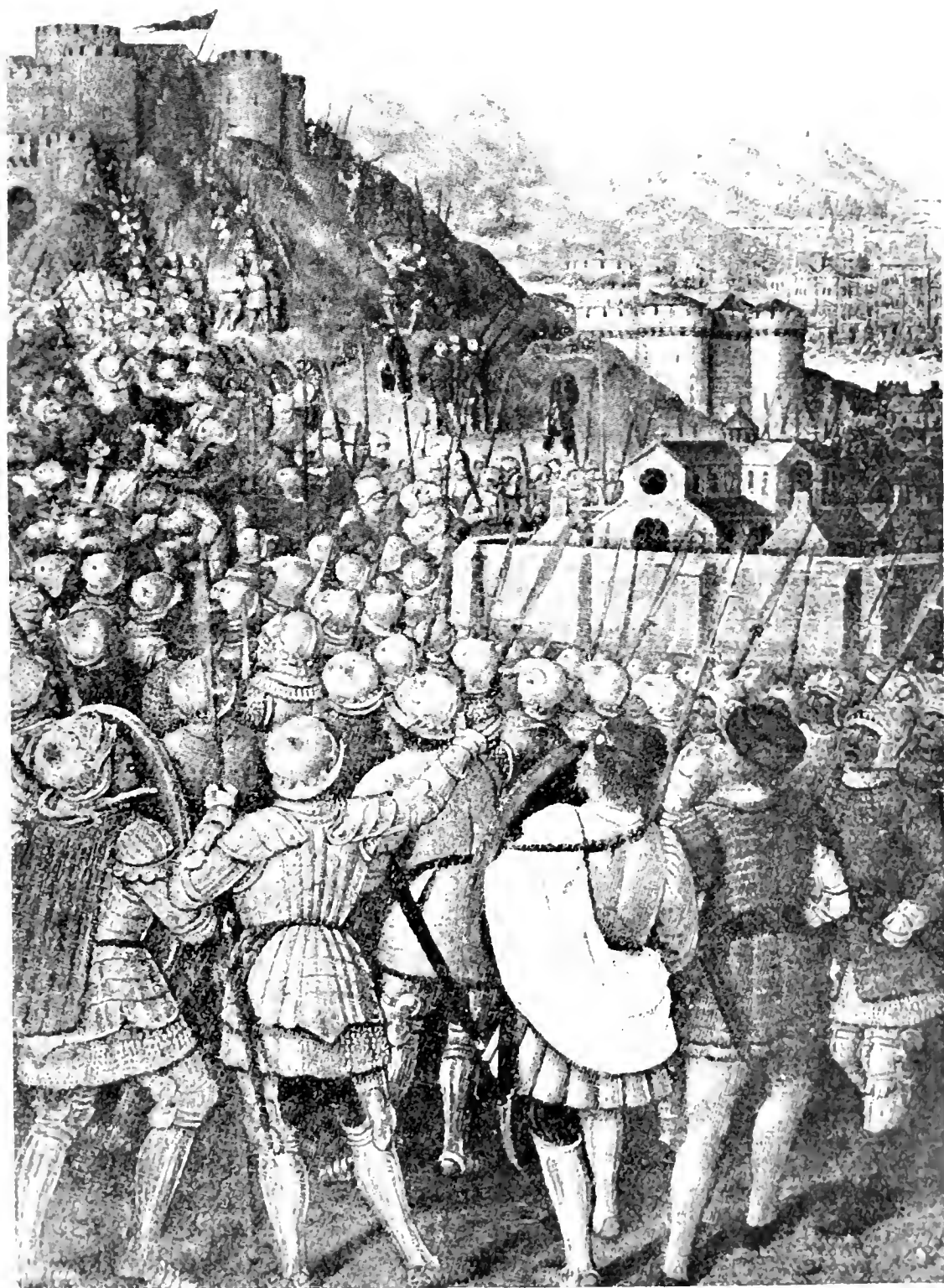
Aleramo, Marchese di Monferrato, signalled the death of his two estimable wives by erecting upon the summit of the lordly Monte Tirazzo, which dominates the valley of the Meglia, a noble castle : it had two lofty towers—one he named Adelasia, and the other Gilberga. The fisherfolk of Lamio, at the base of the mountain where he and Adelasia had lived so long in obscurity and poverty, craved a favour from their former fellow-labourer which he gladly granted. They desired to perpetuate the memory of the Princess, as a simple, industrious working woman, by renaming the hamlet “ Adelasia ” — shortened in use to Alassio. Upon the ruins of Marchesa Aleramo’s castle was founded, in the year 1200, by the piety of his and Adelasia’s descendants, the pilgrimage chapel of Madonna della Guardia, where Masses for their souls’ rest were daily offered.

The environs of Alassio are very lovely—the orchard *par excellence* of the western Riviera. The valley road from Albenga up to Garlanda and Casanuovo is joined to that from Stellanello to Andora Marina, on the coast, by a short ten

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miles of rugged mountain paths. In the irregular triangle thus formed grow perhaps all the fruits, vegetables and flowers of Europe. In the springtime the radiance is almost indescribable, perhaps the great peach-trees strike the dominant note, with their luxuriance of pink bloom set in brilliant glossy green foliage. The natural pergolas of orchard trees and olive are garlanded with tendrils, leaves and hanging bunches of grapes, which, in late summer, kiss the tall blue irises and waving yellow corn-stalks. Green flax bursts into sheets of cerulean blue, and gorgeous poppies peep out among huge golden melons. The vivid ballet of the floral kingdom is danced upon the mossy carpet of joyous nature, whilst lemons, oranges and *pomi carli* drop into thirsty luscious mouths of nymphs and gnomes — the Ligurian Garden of the Hesperides !

Amid all this wealth and beauty there peep out of blossoming fruit trees, and waving plumes of palm, painted towers of brick and plastered stone palaces, with crenelated machioliations and sculptured armorial-bearing façades—the country quarters of the old Genoese nobility, and many of them have thrilling stories of the “good old times.” Among them the Palazzo Lusignano, facing the picturesque islet of Gallinaria, has a romance as tragical as any—it is an exception to the rule of drab modernity. Built in 1416,



SIEGE OF GENOA BY THE FRENCH.

AFTER AN ILLUMINATION.

"Chronique de Jean d'Anton."

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.





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or thereabouts, by Otto Lusignano, brother of the King of Cyprus, it was the fulfilment of an oath. The Prince had been sumptuously entertained by Doge Tommaso Fregoso, and had witnessed a masque and a cotillion—posed and danced by eight hundred young Genoese *gentildonne*, attired, more or less, in thin gold and silver gauze, and glittering all over with pearls and jewels, their hair gathered in a knot at the back and flowing Bacchante-like over their shoulders. The bewitching spectacle so overcame the emotional Prince that he vowed to build a castle in Liguria among the apple-trees, and there to hold sylvan revels with the Genoese beauties for his nymphs.

Years came and went, the Prince and all his family were dead, and no more sylph-like figures glided hither and thither in the mystic dance. The palace too fell on evil days with rarely an inhabitant. But, lo and behold, a new era dawned, and a gracious chatelaine appeared upon the scene, and called her bowery “Arcadia” she was the famous Madame de Genlis, who, in the one time splendid Palazzo Lusignano, wrote her pretty story of “Adèle et Théodore.”

The Duca di Cerifalco was a noble in the suite of Vittore Amadeo II., Duke of Savoy and first King of Sardinia, who entered Genoa after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. The entertainment of the dignified visitors was upon the usual

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lavish and ostentatious scale, although public funds were low, and private wealth had been dissipated. Whatever were the conditions, Genoa and the Genoese clung desperately to precedent and convention. Among the beautiful young girls, in white silk and lace and pearls, who danced at the ducal palace before the Sovereign and his Court, and scattered flowers in the festal way, was one who greatly attracted the Duke's regard. She was not one of the four specially destined for the King's service, and therefore the Duke had less difficulty in approaching her. She was highly born, a Grimaldi, Angela, by name.

The maiden had however been already affianced to a youth, a Guarco, who had family pride but little money. Her father noted the Duke's admiration and, because the *innamorato* was reported to be very rich, he countenanced the liaison, with a characteristic Genoese view of gain. A bargain was struck, but the girl refused point blank to marry Cerifalco and claimed her privilege as a *fiancée*. An attempt was made to settle with young Ambrogio, and, as money was no object, he was pensioned off, not, as it appeared, quite to the Duke's satisfaction. The marriage was hurried on, and what luxuriance of raiment and entertainment were beyond the means of her parents the bridegroom provided. Perhaps it was a nine days' wonder in

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Genoa—the easy disposition of the bride, the rare opulence of the groom.

Young Ambrogio still hung about the Grimaldi Palace, much to Cerifalco's annoyance, nevertheless, leaving nothing to chance, directly the nuptial ceremonies were over he carried off his sixteen-year-old bride—he was well over forty—to his castle of Lusignano in Liguria and placed her under the strict charge of a dour chaperon. To be sure, he surrounded the Ducessa with every comfort and amusement, but he warned her that all intercourse with Genoa must cease. Before the year was out a little daughter was born, and this seemed to remove all the Duke's suspicion, and he left his wife more frequently, and withdrew some of the restrictions of her liberty.

Meanwhile letters and messages passed regularly between the boy and girl, and, daring greatly, Ambrogio, disguised, visited her in her garden bower. Discovery of course was merely a matter of time, and the moment arrived when the Duke, one day riding past my lady's pleasure, picked up the cover of a letter addressed to his wife, and in it a few pencilled lines of hers making an appointment. Needless to say, three persons met at the trysting place, and a duel followed, in which the Duke, through his incontinence and passion, received a nasty wound, and then his antagonist fled into the

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thick forest. Picking up the swooning figure of his wife, he bore her off to the castle, and demanded the name of her lover, which she refused to give. She fell ill of fever : this exactly suited the Duke's design. Secretly in her medicines he mixed a sleeping draught, and, when she awoke not as usual, he caused the report to go forth that the Duchess was dead. He closed her chamber and forbade entrance thereto, keeping the key in his own possession. Upon the third day the Duchess opened her eyes, and saw, standing over her, the man whom she had failed to love and now hated. Again he demanded the lover's name, which she again declined to give. Without more ado Cerifalco took her by force to a dungeon beneath the castle-keep, cast her down, and told her that he had prepared a waxen image, her exact similitude, which he should cause to be laid out for burial and have consigned to the tomb.

Nothing moved unhappy Duchess Angela, and so she remained a close prisoner, bereft of everything but reason, and that tottered. Every day the Duke provided her, with his own hands, with a jug of water and a loaf of bread : when he left home he gave enough to serve during his absence. This provision, however, did not reach her by the door but by a narrow slit in the rocky wall, which opened and shut by mechanical contrivance. When she called his

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name and pleaded for pity he made no reply except to hiss the word "*Nome*"—"Name"—through the orifice. As time went on, although her aliment was unvaried, she was supplied in the same mysterious manner with changes of linen and medicines of a kind—poison!

The dungeon was a natural cavern in the cliff side of immense size: the floor, whereon was a rough wooden bench, for bed and table, was covered with thick hemp mats to suck up the moisture, if for no other purpose. Months ran into years, and the youthful Duchess felt herself to be already a faded woman of past middle age. Perhaps of her appearance, as of all who look ill at Albenga—really an unhealthy place—the current saying was true: "*Hai faccia di Albenga!*"—"She has the Albenga face!"

Relief came at last, if late. One day her prison door flew open suddenly, and, on the threshold, she beheld, not the Duke of Cerifalco, but her erstwhile Genoese boy-lover Ambrogio, now Conte di Belvedere! The Duke was dead, and, for the last two years of his life, he had made the Count his only companion and confidant, although neither knew the other's secret of hate and love. Dying, Cerifalco revealed the fact that his wife was still alive, and he gave Belvedere instructions how to find her, saying to him, to his immense surprise: "You will know her, perhaps, very well, when you see her,

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unless the rats have eaten her nose away. She is an obstinate woman ! ”

What a discovery was that ! What a moment of mingled love, pity and regret ! The Duchess, rendered by her sufferings of mind and body incapable of love—alas, so young, no more than twenty-seven—awed the Count by her demented demeanour. “ Go,” she said, “ love, true once but now impossible, forbids our intercourse, my heart is dead, I only wait on death ! ” However, there was a spark of hope and peace in all the poor woman’s fiery agony of soul : the child she bore the Duke, in that one short year of shadowed happiness, lived—a beautiful girl of ten years old. She and her mother were reunited by the Count, and the poor Duchess, joining their hands together, said : “ There, take her for your own, and do what you will with her for my sake. I am now content to die.”

Madame de Genlis closes the romance with the assurance that the main facts of the story are correct, and she states, moreover, that she had the sad fortune to see and speak to the cruelly tortured Duchess, in Rome, where she made her home, in a convent, after her rescue from that living tomb in Liguria.

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### III

“ *Luce e Fiore!* ”—“ Light and Flowers.” In two short words are expressed the fascination of the sun-glittering sweet-scented Corniche.

Mentone bears the central jewel of that splendid collarette - corsage, resting serenely upon the gracious bosom, sea-loved, of Mother Earth. The sparkling shoulder-knots of the bewitching décolletage—Monaco and San Remo—are lustrous sprays of rubies and emeralds, whilst Mentone is a flashing cluster of diamonds with many brilliant points. Roccabruna, Gorbio Peglia, Sant’ Agnese, Castiglione, Castellare, and Grimaldi—the seven most salient gems in the coruscation—catch dazzling reflections from the ice-crystal mirrors of the ever snowy Alps, and flashlight, with glorious beams, the sapphire surface of the sea.

Keen breezes from northern snow-fields, like busy bees on wing, touch the pine cones and needles on craggy peak and pass, and bear along the invigorating scent of resin-incense. They spread themselves, warmed by the gracious sun, over the uplands and meadows, gathering the delicious fragrance of flowerets, wild and free: they gently waft their healthful course among aromatic shrubs and odour-bearing blooms in the gardens and the groves. Then they mingle

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delightfully with the ozone humours of seaweed and sea-washed shingle, and the happy man or woman, blessed with fortune, health and the spirit of romance, enjoys the most perfect of siestas, or revels in delightful strolls along the wave-lapped beach, and climbs steep pathways ecstatically, for "Light and Flowers" have created a paradise of pleasure at Mentone.

The Counts of Ventimiglia, the ancient and noble Genoese house of Lascare, in days long past, lorded it over that romantic territory of mountain spurs and valley torrents. Their cognomen they gained when Gianduccio, son of Battista, natural son of an Italian king, who in 950, married the Princess Eudoxia, daughter of Teodoro Lascaris, Emperor of the Greeks. His immediate descendants settled in the Grecian colonies of Liguria and Provence and built, on every height, strongholds against Saracen hosts and Corsair pests. Thus the seven points of Mentone's Corniche were crowned with battlements, and every jutting cliff, above Ventimiglia proper, was interlaced by forts and castles. The Lescare tower of Roccabruna was sold to the Grimaldi in 1352 ; the ruins at Gorbio still shelter a decadent Lascare : the Lascare Palace at Peglia—whence come the picturesque *pifferari*, with their pipes, tambourines and quaint dances—is now the town-hall. The stronghold at Castiglione was shattered by the



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earthquake of 1885; at Castellare, on many buildings, still may be seen Imperial eagles—the Lascare badge; Grimaldi has built a church upon the foundations of the ancestral castle. All have passed through many many vicissitudes and have beheld, time out of mind, orgies of butchery and gay scenes galore.

All these picturesque and distant towers—some hanging, like the Castel d'Appio, mid sky and shore—attract powerfully the feet of pedestrians; not indeed so much to ponder over histories of the past as to study nature's beauties of the present day, human and profane. For choice Tenderfoot will rise, with lilting step, to archaic Roccabruna, and gaze, inoffensively, of course, at damsels straight as arrows and swift as deer, or he may spring up the tortuous steps of Castiglione, and after work hours on the slopes look with wonderment, not at the sorry old crones who sit and smoke and chat on weathered doorsteps at noon, but at maidens strong as lions, graceful as gazelles. The women and girls of the western Riviera, and in particular of the glorious span of Mentone's fan, are viragoes stalwart as men. They are burden-bearers unmatchable, with well-rounded hips and swelling waists, braced to firm shoulders and brawny arms, all set on sturdy legs and uncramped feet.

This land is the land of the palm and the aloe.

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The palm, with strong and shapely trunk, erect from foot to crown, bears easily and gracefully its wealth of branches and its weighty fruits : the aloe, springing out of a mass of vigorous green blades, shoots straight up into the air, red and yellow spikes, decorated with brown tassels as elegant as well-coiffured human hair. Very wonderful is this law of affinity between human nature and native flora. To watch the hill-village Mentonese mount these steep stony ways, bearing, upon their knotted hempen coronals, burdens fit more for beasts of burden, is a revelation in the art and grace of movement—each woman is a living Venus di Milo in development and action.

Probably the expedition which will most forcibly attract the climber is to Sant' Agnese—the acme of precipices. The womenfolk are daughters of the Phœnicians and the Saracens, with white veils of modesty upon their classic heads and lighted tapers of devotion in their working hands. Their lot is hard. Upon the summit of what appears to be an inaccessible bare cone, scornfully, as it seems, gazing right down the whole course of the inconstant Borrigo, and right under its spanning bridges into the far-rolling sea, are the ruins of a castle, grey-brown with age, and the roofs of congeries of hovels, clustered around the solitary campanile of the Church of Our Lady of the Snow. Scarcely

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a vestige of green growth enlivens the barrenness—a remarkable contrast to the scented hedges of cistus, myrtle and heliotrope which climb the pine-clad slopes. The castle was built upon the ruins of an earlier fortress, at the end of the tenth century, by a famous Saracen chieftain, who had ousted the lords of the land—"terror of the shore, scourge of the deep"—Harroun the "Fearless."

One wild winter's night, when cold gusts from the frozen north whistled shrilly through each crack and cranny of the bold Corniche, beacon-fires blazed out suddenly from every jutting crag—the dreaded signals of Saracen rapine. Harroun had discerned the rocky diadem of Mentone, and nought should hinder him from fixing on the topmost height his fort of observation. Landing his most trusty warriors upon the peaceful strand, "The Gulf of Peace," so called by Phœnician settlers, he found every hut ablaze, every hamlet deserted, and all the cattle carried off. With uncouth cries the pirates scaled the rocky heights, and, reaching forward to the castle walls, they espied, with wonder, a single maiden, attired wholly in white samite, holding in her hands a cross and a burning torch, and barring the approach to the modest Christian sanctuary under the castle-keep. Harroun called a halt, whilst he advanced alone to parley with the heroic girl.

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“Yield thyself to me,” he cried, “maiden slave and infidel. How darest thou withstand me thus !” The damsel made no reply, but boldly stood her ground.

“Seize her,” he cried to his foremost men, “gently,” he added, as the girl’s courage and her beauty made an emphatic appeal.

“Thy name, tell me, girl, at once !”

“Annice,” she replied, unnerved, in a voice which sounded to the wild foeman like purling water in a brook—the most melodious he had ever heard.

“‘Annice,’ then, shall be the name of the stronghold I will build upon this lofty spot,” exclaimed Harroun, and, “Annice, girl, thou shalt yield thyself to my desires.”

The castle walls rose rapidly, but meanwhile Annice resisted the amorous buccaneer’s advances. Half savage as he was he could not brook opposition to his will. “Bind her,” he cried, “and carry her down safely to the galley, where your mistress and mine, Zara, shall teach her manners.” Zara was Harroun’s vampire-wife, gloating ever over bleeding, beaten, outraged bodies of young Christian girls, brought as prizes to her consort’s couch. Directly she beheld Annice she set to work to plan tortures and mutilations, but she was astounded to find her cruel projects crushed by Harroun himself, who, directly she thrust out her ghoulish hands

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to claw the new victim of brutality, drew his scimitar and cried "Hold ! "

"Thou art sad, Harroun, my lord," Zara said that night, as the waves lapped noisily the side timbers of the great galley. "From whence arises this strange manner ? "

"True, Zara mine," replied the chieftain, "I am sad, but I warn thee not to fathom the secret of my melancholy. I hardly know it myself."

"I know, my lord, what is the matter with thee very well," continued Zara ; "on board this galley is the Sacred Koran, thy aged mother and me—the wife of thy choice—but there is also an infidel—a Christian damsel, fair as fair can be. I hate her, but thou hast shielded her. Harroun mine, if thou lovest me, give her to me and she shall die—see, I go to claim the pig."

Harroun made no reply, but, dashing Zara to the floor, he rushed to Annice's cage, unbound her, and when Zara made as though to seize the girl he threw a cord around his wife, and bade two slaves cast her, bound as she was, there and then, into the wild dark waters of the gulf !

Harroun was a changed man—it was miraculous. War had no longer any attraction, butchery ceased to fascinate, and rapine was repulsive. His galleys remained at anchor, slaves were liberated and sent ashore, garrisons on land were recalled, and houses and lands seized were returned to their rightful owners. The Saracens

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were speechless with amazement, their courage was paralysed, and murmurs took the place of pæans : their leader cared for none of these things, but he spent most of his time with the Christian maiden. He strove with frantic zeal to make her renounce her faith, he offered everything he possessed, and, at last, himself, if she would accept the Koran. Nothing moved her, but she expressed deep gratitude for the respect he had paid her innocence, and then, noting the chieftain's change of countenance, she pressed upon him the superior claims of Christianity.

“ Annice,” he said at last, “ I know not what powers of magic thou possessest. I am weary of this conflict. I have made up my mind that thou shalt be mine—not my slave but my wife. I see that the whole current of my life is changing, and no one but thou canst pilot my course. I mean to dismiss my warriors and to sail to some open port ; of war and robbery I have had my fill, with thee by my side my life shall henceforth be peaceful.

“ Lord Harroun,” replied Annice, “ that cannot be, so long as thou art a Mussulman, and I a Christian. Do what thou wilt, as a man of peace, to atone for thy deeds of ruth, and may the good God bless thee and show thee light ! ”

That day Harroun gave orders to fill one of his galleys with treasures, food and what not—but no weapons of any kind. At midnight he took

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Annice, his aged mother, and her attendants, and, with a crew of picked men, sailed away to Marseilles. Anchored in the offing, Annice begged permission to visit the Monastery Church of St Victor and pay her devotions. Harroun not only granted her request, but, to her astonishment and joy, said he would accompany her. At the porch they parted ; she to kneel before the altar, he to prostrate himself on the pavement outside. There Annice found the proud war-lord Harroun, weeping like a child : she stooped to speak to him, when he arose, embraced her with the deepest emotion, and asked her to lead him to the Christian priest for instruction.

The renunciation of so notable a warrior and so dreaded a tyrant was an event of vast importance. The whole city was aroused, and “ Harroun a Christian ! ” was on every lip, whilst many a hand involuntarily grasped a sword. Meekly he accepted public baptism, stripped not alone of clothes but crimes—and then, and only then, did Annice permit herself to be affianced. It was a great day in Marseilles which saw Harroun and Annice made man and wife together in Christian marriage. The nobles and citizens of Provence united in marking that wedding day : never had such splendid festivities been seen, and, whilst the world saluted Harroun the hero, the Church honoured Annice

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the Heroine. This story of Christian heroism was transcribed in letters of gold and preserved among the treasures of St Victor—it may be seen now in the museum of Marseilles. Ever unaccountable and weird are the rulings of Providence, and so they proved when Harroun set about building a noble habitation upon the Mont de la Garde, worthy of his precious wife, for he fell ill of malarial fever. Giant that he was in physique and will, he at last met one stronger than himself. For a few short weeks Annice ministered most tenderly to her sick husband, and then he closed for ever his eyes upon the world, wherein he had been such a conspicuous beacon.

Marseilles caused splendid funeral honours to be paid the defunct chieftain, and Annice covered his tomb with freshest flowers. Her mourning, however, was not of long duration: she renounced the things of the world and craved admission to St Victor's Convent. Before she parted for ever, in her enclosed cell, with mundane things, she resolved to visit the scene of her rape by the Saracens—the castle peak above Mentone. There she endowed a chapel to Saint Agnes, her patron saint, who had so wonderfully protected her through life. She spent much time in the home of her childhood in prayer and charity, and she was looked upon by the simple peasant-folk as an angel in human form. Her name





PHOTO.

THANISTAI NGI.

CHILDREN OF THE MARCHESE  
FRANCESCO BALBI.

Anthony Vandyck.  
COLLECTION OF THE LORD LUCAS.



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Annice they quickly changed to Agnese—the saint of the pure white lamb—as such she appealed to them. By her will she directed that Harroun's wealth, which came to her intact, should be divided between the Monastery of St Victor—the place of his renunciation and baptism, and of their nuptials—and the chapel and village of Sant' Agnese—for the people now called it by her name. Her end drew near, redolent of the sweet odour of sanctity, and one bright day in early summer the priest missed his constant saintly worshipper. No one had seen her that day, but they found "Agnese the Saint" quietly sleeping the sleep of death, clad in her cloister habit, and holding a cross and candle in either hand. She was simply buried at St Victor beside her husband.

The fame of good Annice, or Agnese, is by no means dead, although she has been dust many a century of years. The village *festa* on the anniversary of her death is one of the prettiest and quaintest in all that Ligurian land of the picturesque. Every woman and girl within walking distance of her shrine—and they can trudge vast distances untired—dons her Sunday Mass black gown, upon her head she wears a white folded linen kerchief, upon her bosom rests the little charm of her Sant' Agnese, and in her hand she carries, like the "Saint," a crucifix and a lighted taper. A procession moves

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around the hilly village and about the ruins of Harroun's castle, and, upon the spot where Annice confronted the Saracen chieftain, the most reputable villager offers to the priests an apple filled with golden coins—the symbolism of which it is not hard to divine. Mass is sung in the open air, and then the peasants divide their time amid the attractions of a pleasure fair, till the curfew peals forth from the campanile, and all make tracks for home.

Formerly, and indeed until quite recently, games were enjoyed on every narrow open space, and among them was a quaint survival of the Rape of St Agnese. Marriageable girls, dressed all in white, approved by the Church and commune, took their places by Annice's station, each bearing a portion of the golden apple. Youths, whose thoughts ever turn gaily to the things of love, were ranged in a wide circle around the girls, and at a signal each lad rushed forward and bore off in his arms the maiden of his choice. He who most quickly carried off his *fiancée* to the greatest distance was hailed as the winner of a bright gold ducat and a brand new leather belt, whilst the blushing maiden received a cap of maternity. The "Age of Gold" still lives in the hearts of the innocent, and Metastasio—Pietro Trapassi of Rome and Liguria—the poet, sweetly sang of it in his "*Temistocle*" :

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“ Ah ! ritorna età dell'oro,  
Alla terra abbandonata,  
Se non fosti immaginata  
Nel sognar felicità

Non e ver ; quel dolce stato  
Non fuggi, non fu sognato ;  
Ben lo sente ogn'innocenta  
Nella sua tranquillità.”

### IV

The principality of Monaco, although one of the smallest sovereign states of Europe has occupied politically and socially, a premier position for well-nigh five hundred years. The territory between Mentone and Nice was originally in the possession of the Counts of Provence, but the Saracens repeatedly devastated the coast, and built strongholds at Eza, Turbia, and upon Cap San Martino, to overawe the peaceful inhabitants. At length, upon the invitation of successive Emperors of Germany, the Genoese undertook to rid the Riviera of these buccaneer pests. A punitive expedition was fitted

<sup>1</sup> “ Hail ! for once more doth the Age of Gold  
Return to earth of joy abandoned,  
Where nought stirs imagination bold,  
And little happiness is fashioned,  
  
'Tis true that, whate'er the lot may be,  
Kindly dreams will nurture every sense ;  
The measure of life's tranquillity  
Is the record of its innocence.”

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out, under the command of a knightly citizen—Gibellino Grimaldo. Victory crowned the Christian arms, Grimaldo was hailed as the people's deliverer, and, for his reward, received the fee-simple of the whole of the littoral, back to the Corniche. This grant was confirmed by the Emperor Frederic I., with the consent of Guillaume, Comte de Provence, who withdrew his ancestral claims. One condition of the charter was that Grimaldo should erect a fortified castle upon the promontory of Monaco—"for the better defence of Christians against the infidels."

At the foundation of the castle a very picturesque ceremony was performed. In 1191 Messir Fulco di Castello, a merchant-soldier of Genoa, who volunteered to go and assist Cavaliere Grimaldo in the erection of the fortress, sailed with a fleet of galleys, laden with timber, bricks, cement, iron and other building materials, and a goodly company of artificers and adventurers. Landing in the bay, on 6th June, where now is situated the Monte Carlo suburb of Condamines, the commander was courteously welcomed by the inhabitants, and escorted to the castle site by a charming procession of young girls, clad wholly in white, and bearing branches of olive and pure white doves of Santa Devota. Thrice the company encircled the marked-out castle precincts; then the Emperor's proclamation was

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read aloud by Grimaldo, and di Castello presented him, in the name of the Republic of Genoa, with a splendidly chased steel lock and keys to place upon the great portal. Hymns and odes were sung by the fair young maidens, who doubtless danced delightfully, as all Ligurians do, before the dignitaries. The ritual ended when the two best-looking dancers, kneeling before Cavalieri Grimaldo and di Castello, offered to each helm-sprays of wrought-silver olive leaves.

The Grimaldi, one of the four great ruling Houses of Genoa, go back for their founder to the heroic Grimaud, great-uncle of Charlemagne. The ruins of his castle—the cradle of the family—still crown picturesquely the chestnut-embowered hill of Cogolin, near Frèjus and San Raphael. The sway of the Grimaldi over the marquisate of Monaco was, however, not very long left undisputed. The Spinola—their inveterate rivals in politics and industry—wrested the castle and its territory from their owners, and, for two hundred years, deadly internecine war raged around the barren “rock of Monaco.” Now the Grimaldi cognisance, and now that of the Spinola, waved above the great stone keep.

By a neat stratagem, in 1306, Marchese Carlo Grimaldo managed to enter the citadel unobserved, when all the inmates were attending their Christmas Mass, and, having slain the solitary sentinel, he admitted his followers, and

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without much difficulty put the entire garrison to the sword. Since that deed of blood one branch or another of the family has retained possession of the castle, the town, and the principality. Whilst splendidly successful in the forum of politics and in the markets of commerce, the Grimaldi were extraordinarily unfortunate in the arena of war. Time out of mind warlike expeditions commanded by *Cavalieri* of the house met with disasters. Wisely seeing that the strength of the family lay not in the clash of gruesome weapons, they withdrew by degrees from the prominent position they held in Genoa proper, and settled down peacefully on their princely possessions. By shrewd treaties and slim bargains they added territories and privileges to their principality: in 1346 Carlo Grimaldo purchased Mentone and its county, from Emmanuele di Vento, and Roccabruna with Cabbe, in 1363, from Guglielmo Lescare, Conte di Ventimiglia—the latter acquisition costing 151,000 gold ducats. Sometimes, however, circumstances were less propitious; in 1448, for example, Prince Giovanni II. ceded Mentone and Roccabruna to the Duke of Savoy in consideration of an annual subsidy of two thousand gold ducats. Antonio Grimaldo, Cavaliere di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme, who had reverted to the noble calling of arms in the name of the Republic in 1373, con-



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quered Famagosta and all Cyprus and acquired signorial rights over the San Giano peninsula—now Saint Jean de Beaulieu, and Villafranca.

Monaco was for many many years a desolate spot, where neither greenery nor flowers grew nor bloomed :

“ Monaco io sono—ano scoglio  
Del mio, non ho—quello non taglio,  
D'altrui, per viver voglio.

Son Monaco, sopra un scoglio  
Non semino, non raccoglio  
E pur mangiar voglio.”<sup>1</sup>

The year 1380 was a dark one in the annals of Genoa : she sent forth her stoutest and her best to war against her rival, the “ Queen of the Adriatic.” At Chioggia, after terrible losses and privations, the 4000 survivors of the Genoese Armada surrendered unconditionally, with twenty-one war galleys. Every campanile bell tolled for the brave, and every woman and girl in Genoa covered her face and her breast with a dark veil. Widows and orphans filled the offices of the Banco di San Gorgio, and many families fell to rise no more. The Genoese commander

<sup>1</sup>“ Monaco I am call'd, a barren rock,  
Of my own have I nothing, so I tax  
All others, and thus I manage to live.

Monaco am I upon a high cliff,  
I neither sow aught, nor yet do I reap,  
But somehow I pick up my daily bread.”

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Napoleone Grimaldo, loaded with chains, was exhibited as a prize of war on the Piazza San Marco : whilst women and children lay dead at Chioggia, famished for want of food, leather soaked in salt-water failing to keep body and soul together.

Romance illuminates and darkens by turns the story of the Grimaldi : tragedy and comedy held them on either hand, speeding forth from goal to goal. In 1447 Calamo Grimaldo, " Signore di Monaco," died, leaving an only child—Claudia. His will directed that all his property should devolve upon her absolutely, upon two conditions : " that she enters not a convent but doth marry a good man, not over rich but of modest bearing and shrewd in affairs," and " that her spouse do take the name Grimaldo in lieu of his own." Fair Claudia married her cousin, Lamberto Grimaldo, and so kept the money as well as the name, as her father had really intended. They had a numerous family, but Lamberto Grimaldo gave his sons a very bad example—he was possessed of an ungovernable temper. Giovanni, who succeeded his father as Signore or Prince of Monaco, in a dispute with his younger brother, Luciano, was stabbed by him to the heart—he was only eighteen years of age. Twenty years later Luciano met like punishment at the hands of his nephew, Bartolommeo Doria of Dolceacqua, and this second

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murderer came to a tragic end also, for he was beheaded as a traitor to his cause by order of the Emperor Charles V. Princess Claudia outlived the tragedies of her House, but she spent the last twenty years of her life in the Convent of Saint Honorat de Lérins, far away from her home and among strangers, bowed down with sorrow and suffering, a broken-hearted recluse in a foreign land.

To this Bartolommeo Doria belonged an imposing castle, the ruins of which crown the valley of the Nervia, above Ventimiglia—a significant relic of a vivid past. It was for many years partly a convent of the “Sisters of the Snow,” and it partly served the purposes of a village school. Where Donna Birgida Doria, in her hoop of yellow brocade, ruff and jewels, with her poodle under her arm, in 1290, gracefully postured and grimaced in a minuet, devotional figures glided silently along to Prime and Vespers. She gazed down, from her black frame in the refectory, and, facing her, was another lady of the family, in a long-bodied white figured-silk dress, with white plumes in her hair, and pearls at her throat. She had two comely children with her, who probably felt out of place among the roughly clad and riotous school youngsters. One of these ladies, perhaps both, made use, doubtless, of the fine old sedan-chair, preserved in the convent guest-chamber,

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with its grand old fireplace sculptured with Doria portraits. In a small back room there was a double floor, under which all the Doria family papers were concealed when Buonaparte approached Ventimiglia.

Ercole Grimaldo, grandson of the Princess-Canoness Claudia, was one of the greatest monsters of that age of the "Tyrannicide." Gifted by nature above the ordinary with splendid physique, good looks and excellent health, and by art, with candour, chivalry and culture, he prostituted his opportunities and became a besotted *debauché* and a violator of women. The Monégasques, aroused to frenzy by the odious treatment of their daughters, rose *en masse*, and, in 1604, they invaded the castle, and demanded to see the Prince. His hiding-place was soon discovered and thence ignominiously he was dragged forth and unceremoniously pitched head foremost down the deep well in the avant courtyard!

Quietly Luigi stepped into his father's shoes—not indeed as an immoral tipster—a lad of sixteen. He was entirely under French influence through his mother, a daughter of Bourgogne, and he had Louis XIV. for his sponsor. The King married him right off to Mademoiselle Charlotte Louise, daughter of the Marechal Duc de Grammont. She was a *dame d'honneur* of the Duchesse d'Orléans and "*une grande amour-*

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*euse du Roy.*” Never was there a more miserable couple. Very unwillingly the bride left Paris and its attractions, but one brief year in the dull castle of Monaco sufficed—she packed herself, her household, her clothes and her jewels off to her beloved Paris. King Louis received her with effusion, created her Duchesse de Valentinois, and assigned to her, as her *cavalier d’honneur*, the attractive Conte de Langan.

Whilst Madame la Princesse was once more quite in her element, and eloquent in disparagement of her deserted spouse, he, Prince Luigi Grimaldo, mourned his misfortune and vowed vengeance all round. He caused a system of espionage to be woven around his faithless consort, whence he gathered readily enough the names and characters of her lovers. Seeing that money was no object and that the Prince was never satiated by the numbers and *faux pas* of his wife’s intimates at the French court, the wary spies in his employ failed not to fan his fury by invention and innuendo.

Something like a climax was reached in his Princely passion when he determined to perpetuate the memory of his wife’s falls from virtue by ordering that each of her lovers should have his wooden effigy stuck up in the palace courtyard. To each of these he, with his own hand, affixed a label bearing the reputed name and character of the original. Very soon the

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courtyard could not contain all the figures which Prince Luigi caused to be put up : they overflowed the avant-court and reached almost all the way down the castle approach to Condammes. No more extraordinary array of worthless worthies was ever presented to the vulgar gaze, and the people looked on with wonder and disgust. Daily the mock pageant of an execution was carried out in the courtyard, for each effigy in turn was hung up by the neck to a branch of one of the great carouba-trees !

Tidings of these quaint doings reached the ears of the errant Princess, and she was mightily enraged. She sent a scornful message to her forsaken spouse : “ Moderate,” she said, “ your stupid whim, and destroy at once those monstrosities, as I command you ! ” The Prince curtly replied : “ I am master of the State, and I shall go on hanging accursed Frenchmen so long as they go on meddling with my wife ! ”

The scandal boomed, it could not be hid, the Court roared and joked the Duchess : the King was furious—for at the head of the parade of dummies was his own effigy. He ordered his fascinating “ *amoureuse*,” and all her belongings, back to Monaco post haste under military escort. Luigi had due knowledge of her coming, and he prepared a characteristic and unique reception. Meeting Louise by the cell of Santa Devota—certainly a very inappropriate rendez-

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vous for them—he required her to go a-foot up the castle approach, whilst he named to her each of the “gentlemen-in-waiting” there! She stoutly refused, and, stamping upon the ground, dared Luigi to touch her, or to order his retainers to molest her: “I will remain here,” she protested, “till the King of France comes and puts you out of my way!” Peace, however, was patched up diplomatically by the Prince’s mother, Violanta, Prince Ercole’s widow. She persuaded her son not to insist upon such a perfectly ridiculous *entrée* to the castle, and he consented to allow his wife to enter the palace in a sedan-chair with the blinds drawn. Upon her own initiative the Princess Violanta ordered all the effigies to be collected, and burnt upon the beach at Condamines.

Whilst the Duchesse de Valentinois was playing ducks and drakes with men’s hearts, and that of Luigi Grimaldo in particular, he, on his part, was no less engaged in amorous passages. One of the reigning beauties of the French Court—and they were not few nor reputable—was Madame Hortense Mancini, the official wife of the newly created Duc de Mazarin: she incurred the Royal displeasure in an *affaire d’amour*, and was forced to leave Paris. Prince Luigi met the wanderer in Rome, and became enamoured of her charms. After coquetting most bewitchingly the light-hearted Duchess left her lover, and

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went off to London, where she fascinated Charles II. Luigi could not lightly lose his beauteous Diana and he taxed the King with his intentions ! Charles adroitly adjusted matters by bestowing a pension of £4000 upon the angry Prince. This he handed over, with his parting blessing, to the fair Hortense, along with some sonnets he had written in his infatuation, and went back to Monaco to nurse his disappointment and chagrin.

Prince Luigi died in 1701, and was succeeded by Antonio, his son by Charlotte Louise. Of her death there appears to be no record. The new Prince's reign was, perhaps, most remarkable on account of the splendid ballets he gave in imitation of the *fêtes galantes* at Versailles. He was his own stage-manager and conductor, playing first violin himself. Doubtless to his foresight and encouragement the votaries of fashion nowadays are able to enjoy the fascinating spectacles of the gardens and saloons of Monte Carlo. He was the last male of the senior line of the Grimaldi of Monaco. His daughter, Louise Hippolite, married, in 1715, Jacques Matignon, Conte de Thorigny. She inherited her father's property, and her husband assumed her name, and became, *ipso facto*, Prince of Monaco, in spite of the Salic law : from him is descended the present holder of the title.

Upon San Cap Martino, which, like the axis of



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a fan, was the centre of the wide expansion of the Monaco principality, was the Grimaldi villa of Carnoles. It has been modernised, and has lost whatever romance it possessed ; but the venerable and magnificent umbrella pines still remain, and the wind moans through their great branches, and whispers of days when the nuns of the ruined convent hard by rang out in vain their alarm bell. When Saracens were ravaging the Riviera with sword and fire the defenceless Religious made the men of Roccabruna promise to hasten to their assistance should they be attacked—the signal being the clanging of their chapel bell. The abbess, to test their promise, caused the bell to be rung when there was no foe at hand. True to their word the stalwart peasants rushed to the rescue, but were disgusted to find that their night's rest had been unnecessarily disturbed. Some time later peril actually arose, and the bell summoned the defenders, but, alas ! the cry of “ Wolf, Wolf,” when there was no terror, restrained the men's ardour, and the morning sun revealed the convent in flames—the nuns were prisoners on board the enemy feluccas !

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RIVIERA—ROMANCES OF THE RIVIERA DI LEVANTE

#### I

EASTERN Liguria differs in many notable ways from its sister Riviera ; it is the land of poets priests and craftsmen ; its natural beauties are unique. “ There is nothing in Italy,” wrote Charles Dickens, “ more beautiful than the coast road from Genoa to Spezia.” The pageant of the Riviera di Levante moves, now, in solemn measure with the decorated image of St Sebastian borne aloft on stalwart shoulders : now, with lilting steps to the pleasant rhythm of Petrarch’s sonnets, danced in vineyards.

“ I marvel,” wrote Laura’s lover, “ at Genoa’s circling chain of bewitching beauty spots. No littoral is more lovely. The simple cult of Ceres along her domain is absorbed in the mystic rites of Bacchus. Fond Falerno pales her bloom and restrains her bouquet beside the ruddier nectar of Monterosso and Carneglia. The god-kissed fruit of Pallas, by sybarite Luni’s rippling bay, excels in sweetness and satisfaction the fabled potency and enchantment of Piræus.”

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The shapely left arm of Genoa is stretched out along the rocky coast, grappling warily with sensitive fingers the salient points of natural beauty and historical romance. Between the tip of her little finger, dipped in the torrent of the Bisagno, and the spread of her thumb over the Gulf of Spezia—the whole span of her incomparable hand—extends a panorama which makes an appeal to every sense. Scarcely have we cleared the great unfinished eastern suburb of the “Proud City” than we are in the midst of a paradise of olive-yards and lemon-groves. Quaint looking villages, perched on every eminence, and *cassine*—little white houses—peep coquettishly through their natural veils of verdure. The latter are the modest homes of industrious weavers of silks and velvets, where many an ancient loom and frame still produce excellent materials. Each little dwelling has its vines, its pumpkins, its figs, its herbs, its vegetables, its flowers and its bees. The peasantry are comfortably off and well content, for they are never idle.

The coast towns of Sturla, Quarto, Quinto and Nervi—grouped most picturesquely in land-locked coves—contain more gaily coloured houses than anywhere else in Italy—a yellow church, a pink convent, and a green town hall, and all over *sgraffiti*. Their aspect is far more vivid than the *mise-en-scène* of theatrical spectacle :

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their every day's tragedy and farce surpass in natural interest the dramas of the stage. At Villa Marcello—now Donghi, a rare example of the best Lombardo-Gothic architecture—in 1363, Doge Simone Boccanegra was poisoned at a banquet he gave to the King of Cyprus. Santa Maria degl' Angeli of Sturla claimed his body for interment, but night-snatchers carried it off in a black felucca to Ponte Embriaco in Genoa's harbour, and thence bore it to the hill-side sanctuary of San Francisco di Casteletto.

Above Sturla, passing through deliciously scented lemon and quince groves, and climbing steep woody ravines, the summit of Monte Fasce is attained, whence a stupendous view ranges over land and sea, and right away over barren spurs of semi-snowy Apennines to the ice-fields of distant Alpine Monte Rosa. Midway is the shrine of *l'Apparizione*, built upon the spot where a poor peasant woman, Riccia, who had lost husband, children and her all—when Saracen marauders ravaged the land—besought "*La Santissima Madonna*" for comfort and aid. The Virgin, it was affirmed, appeared in a *mandola* at the urgent cries of the poor creature, with the *Bambino in fasce*—swathing-bands.

The coast-line of the Riviera di Levante is quite unlike that of the Riviera di Ponente. Upon the latter the mountains have not encroached so rudely, nor has the sea cast up such



LA MARCHESA CATERINA DURAZZO.

Anthony Vandyck.

PALAZZO DURAZZO—PALLAVICINI, GENOA.



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vast stores of shingle. Like a beautiful woman, made only for love and flattery, lies the gracious foreshore, the gently heaving bosom of the coroneted Corniche: whilst her sister, vixen-like, seeks no compliments, but grasps roughly the attenuated littoral with the boldness of a virago and the cunning of a mermaid. She has left very little more than a foothold for man and beast, and at some points not even that, consequently, we must mount jagged precipice and terminal moraine, thence to look down upon Nevi, Recco and the rest—each a tantalising prison-house where we cannot stretch our legs.

Camogli, seen from the heights, is like a model toy by the margin of a fairy ocean, baked and bronzed by the sun. Creeping down with care, step by step, along the winding mule-track, the little town, when reached at last, is still in miniature, a primitive place—most briny, most uncouth, and most smuggler-like imaginable. The men and women are marine monsters, more or less; the former, mostly dozing comfortably among their fish and nets—the latter, toiling with big splashing water-pots upon their heads, babies bundled on their backs, and knitting in the hands—their tongues—two for a man's! Yet, Camogli has had, perhaps still has, her memories—the name is suggestive enough—“*Casa Moglie*,” “The House of Women”!

Time out of mind wild western hurricanes

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have lashed into fury the rolling, pounding waves of deep dark blue sea-swirl, and have hurled them with thunderous thud upon those unyielding rocks. Woe to vessel, great or small, unported and drifting before the gale, scant chance of escape is there for man or lading in that *cul-de-sac* behind villain Punta della Chiappa, "Point of the Snare! The fabled sea-cave of the vampire sirens was surely here.

Why exactly this romantic home of sea-dogs bears its name "Camogli" is uncertain; but it is certain it is a record of noble deeds by noble women; husbands were wreckers but their wives were rescuers. The lustre of their intrepidity highly shone so lately as 1855. The troopship "*Cræsus*," on her way to the Crimea from Genoa, where she had embarked supplies, took fire off "The Women's House." The fisherfolk, smugglers or no, put off at once in their swift coracles to the assistance of those aboard the doomed vessel—looking no doubt more to pelf than to reward. Burnt to the water's edge, the majority of the troops found watery graves: the rescuers were inadequate in such a catastrophe. Two dauntless women—Grace Darlings of these days—plied their oars with strong arms in unison with kindly wills, and, to the credit of the heroines, Maria and Caterina Avenga, Fame has placed the rescue of twenty British soldiers. Alas! upon the last voyage to and fro



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the land the crazy barque capsized, and noble Maria, the elder of the two, sank to rise no more.

Cast up by the wearied tempest of the deep upon the cornelian-beryl shingle, scores of mutilated bodies, along with one brave woman's, were reverently covered and borne to the abbey cemetery for interment. Caterina Avenga is laid there too; her grave is no fulsome monument, but a simple headstone and a grassy mound. She and her mother sleep the sleep of the righteous, watched by St Mary of the Seven Stars, whilst the wreck of the "*Cræsus*" remains under the revengeful waves enwrapped by seaweed and barnacles.

The peninsular promontory of Portofino, with its lavish flora, is a "*Pétite Afrique*," as the expression goes in naturalistic nomenclature. The name itself, and the names of places thereupon, are all indicative of luxuriance and charm. Upon the extreme point of the verdure-clad cliffs are the remains of Castello di Pagi—"Castle of Content." San Fruttuoso—"The Fruitful" or "The Profitable"; Cervara—"The Hind's Bed"; Silvanea—"Rural Retreat," are all eloquent of Nature's choicest gifts and of man's appreciation thereof. The names also of many natural objects are full of poetry, charm and grace: *madra selva*—honeysuckle; *scarpette della Madonna*—shoe-orchids; *fior del*

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*Paradiso* — periwinkle ; *pesce angelo* — silver whiting ; *Regina del mare*—sea-bream. Portofino is moreover a miniature Holy Land. Every eminence is dedicated to the gracious Madonna, under as many sympathetic attributes, and every hamlet is named after a saint—the saints most human in appeal : Sebastian, the Christian Apollo ; Catherine, the Scholar Maid ; Margaret, the Fisher Girl ; Nicholas, of sailors ; George, champion of maidenhood, and so on. In the territory of Portofino there are more religious communities and congregations, or at least their remains, than in any other similarly restricted area. There, too, religious observances and spectacles retain primitive devotion and effect. Troubadours, Crusaders, Flagellants, emperors, kings, popes, statesmen, poets and artists, have all left their marks in Portofino. It has been, time out of mind, the battleground of opposing forces, the seat of human learning, and the hub of human progress. These varied influences have left indelible signs upon the land and upon its inhabitants. The men are valiant in fight, devout in religion : the women, pushful in domestic duties and constant.

St George has its chapel near the *Punta*, and therein repose his relics. It was built by coral fishers in 1154, and is the scene annually of his festival, a feature of which is one of the prettiest and quaintest processions to be seen anywhere in

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all the length of Italy. The *Confratelli* of the *Oratorio di San Giorgi*, whose badge is “*Modestia e Ubbidienza*,” control the concourse of participants. From every village and farmstead come young girls in blue, wearing their First Communion veils of white lawn; young married women in scarlet gowns and white stitched chemisettes with gay *pezzotti* on their heads; and older matrons in solemn black stuff and red coral lace. Singing nuns, in their varied habits from the convents, and hosts of little children—“*Luigiani*” they are called, belonging to the *Congregazione di San Luigi di Gonzaga*—raise their sweet voices in the vernacular to hymn the Champion of their sex. Adult members of the rival Oratories—the *Bianchi* and *Neri*—carry aloft immense crucifixes and emblems of saints. Some of them bear on their shoulders venerated silver reliquaries, much like those of the “*Cassacie*” in Genoa. They wind their way, as best they can, in and out of crannies in the rocky path, through tortuous lanes, and over stony stretches of rough beach—a pilgrimage in little, such as their forebears had ever made in imitation of the great Crusades. The *festa* ends at night-fall with a display of fireworks and discharge of cannon from the summit of San Martino—something like the belching flames and fumes of the fierce dragon St George the valiant slew!

Nowhere, upon the Feast of San Giorgio and

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ever after in summer time, do grasshoppers, crickets and locusts, foregather in greater numbers than in Portofino, and nowhere is their rasping chorus so vociferous—it drowns the human voice and all other sounds of Nature. Children love the *cicale* and make little cages of rush and willow in which to keep them securely. They say their noisy grating movements mean for mortals :

“ Mietete<sup>s</sup> battete andare al molino,  
Fariete<sup>...</sup> un panino,  
Anche per me conservate un pezzettino ! ” <sup>1</sup>

### II

San Fruttuoso has a record at once historical and romantic. It is but a cluster of old-world houses—frescoed by man’s art and mellowed by the hand of Time—around a little monastic sanctuary, deep deep down, in the most picturesque hide-and-seek sort of sea-cove, of all that rocky range of wind-swept precipices and sea-sucked caverns. It is only accessible by water in winter ; in summer there is a dizzy path safe enough for nimble human foot. The monastery

<sup>1</sup> “ Reap the corn, thrash the corn,  
Go to the mill and grind it,  
Make a little loaf then,  
And keep for me a small bit.”

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dates, it is said, from the year 259, when three holy seafaring saints—Fruttuoso, Augurio and Eulogio—from far-away Hispania, landed upon a shelving rock, which had been indicated by the Madonna. Their first business was to slay a deadly dragon which drew its slimy length all over that beauteous region, devouring daily a maiden or two, just as did his reptilian brother in far-away Cappadoccia.

A hideous storm—which drowned by its clamour the fearful groans of the monster—cleared with its spent breath, and, where had been its lair, the affrighted but courageous Christian warriors discovered a spring of purest water ; but, lapping thereat, were three great growling lions ! These beasts, fortunately for the hunters, came and crouched at their feet, each having for his keeper a beauteous damsel, each arrayed in the most becoming and most simple of toilettes, the lustrous tresses of her own rich auburn hair. What became of the lions, the maidens and the saints no one can say : so often do charming legends break off when they most fascinate !

In the tenth century, perhaps in 988, the great Empress Adelheid, widow of Otto III., paid a visit to San Fruttuoso and, together with a rich endowment of lands and chattels, created a fund for the dowries of virtuous damsels of the peninsula—probably in devout memory of the

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lion-maidens. Then there appeared, a century later, another benefactor, the first of his family to enrich San Fruttuoso, Martino Doria, its abbot, and founder of San Matteo's Church in Genoa. In the thirteenth century the Church of San Fruttuoso became the burial-place of that proud noble house. There have come silently borne in black-hersed galleys, with torches flaming, the body caskets of Guglielmo, Niccolo, Ansaldo, Babilano, Egidio and many another city magnate and sea admiral of Genoa. Andrea " the Great " built the Doria Tower for defence against corsairs and for the dignity of his successors. The sacred buildings are nowadays little better than ruins, and the few inhabitants have little of the bearing of saints and heroes, but there still brood over the brown roof-trees and among the white spikes of the chestnut the spirits of a noble past.

The folk-lore and quaint customs of Portofino and its eerie confines are full of interest, as might well be expected. In the hamlet of Portofino lived, years and years ago, an idle village girl, whose parents could make nothing of her ; no swain asked for such a lass. One day there fared that way a country pedlar from Rapallo, not a very attractive fellow to be sure, but honest, though not over particular about his love affairs. Ser Giovanni offered his daughter, with a nice little purse of money, if Pietro would marry her

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right off. Happily, or rather unhappily, the complacent groom took the sporting offer, and he and Margherita were wedded. Very soon the husband discovered that he had made a sorry bargain, for his wife neglected his home and failed in all domestic duties, and he upbraided her soundly. Margherita took the bitter chidings to heart, and wept and prayed. Presently she felt a fairy-like itching in her finger ends, and, somehow or other, the yellow maize *pasta* or porridge of her simple daily menu suddenly got splashed and twisted all over her hands, which, when she tried to withdraw, became covered with a web of delicate gold lace ! What incantation was used, and how astounded Margherita persevered, have not been told—perhaps she span on and on till Pietro was constrained to withdraw his early bad opinion, whilst his pockets were filled by the profits of her miraculous industry !

The *contadini* are confirmed fatalists. If a girl makes an unhappy marriage they exclaim : “ *Era il suo destino !* ” A bride-elect has to make with her own hands a white shirt each for her man, for his brothers and his uncles, and for his father two ; and this is intended as a safeguard from wounds and bites and stings. Should a firefly alight on the hand of a man or maid affianced it is taken as a convincing token of good luck. They call the brilliant little insect

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“*ciæe bella*” — “lovely light-bearer” — and children sing a pretty rhyming catch :

“*Ciæe bella !*”

*Vegne a basso :*

*Te daiò ;*

*Un po de siasso !*”

Among quaint sayings common in the Portofino peninsula is one relating to the domestic cat ; if puss sits contentedly purring by the hearth the inmates remark with satisfaction to one another : “*far le fuse !*” “she is sending the spindle through the web,” and they look for a stroke of good fortune on the morrow. On Palm Sunday the *contadini* take silkworms’ eggs to church to hear the “Passion” ; this is to ensure sound caterpillars and fat cocoons. On Maundy Thursday, when all the bells of the *campanili* ring out in wildest discord, children rush down the steep gullies to the hollow shore and splash each other with sea-water—a sign that “the water washes away all ills.” “*Il Signore ve lo benedica*” is said the first time any one sees a new-born child ; it is repeated too by every visitor to a new house, and, strangest of all, girls say it to one another when combing out their hair, first thing of a morning ; omitted, the baby may die, the house may fall, the head may become bald. The sight of a miraculous image, or picture, or a recitation of some wonderful story, calls forth the remark : “*Io ci credo : ma*



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*poi chissa se e vero!*”—“ I believe, but still who can say if it is true ! ”

A little way from Portofino, reached by a practical road, is the celebrated Monastery of San Gerolamo della Cervara. It was founded in 1361 by Ottone Lanfranco, a priest of Genoa, on condition that an annual tribute should be paid of three pounds of best white wax to the Chapter of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, and a like amount to the Archbishop. It was Petrarch's great friend, Archbishop Settimo, who laid this tribute upon the Religious of San Gerolamo della Cervara. He not infrequently sought the peace of that lovely cloister and, probably accompanied by his poet-companion, entered into the spirit of true solitude. In “ *Africa* ” Petrarch voices this sentiment—the “ peace of the Ligurian shore ” :

“ I ever sought a life of solitude,  
This know these shores, and every lawn and wood,  
To fly from those deaf spirits and blind, away,  
Who, from the purity of Heaven, have gone astray.”

Santa Margherita, in its scallopshell-like bay, is the most beautiful spot in all the Riviera di Levante, and its people are amongst the most industrious. The men are handsome, well built and very strong ; the women are good-looking and vigorous ; and the children, with their fair hair and skin, are human fairies, fleet as gazelles, cheery as crickets. Everybody is busy, even the weaned babies. The coral fishers provide

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patterns for the lace-workers ; cheese and macaroni making give opportunities for the united labour of the sexes, and opportunities too for Prince Cupid and his bow and arrows !

Rapallo has existed for more than nineteen centuries, when the wild dwellers of the hills first descended, built their huts along the great *Via Aurelia*, and were at grips with Roman legionaries. The town, when Christian, became a fief of the Papal Tiara, and remained faithful to Guelfan traditions. The Crusades gave Rapallo to Genoa ; so her people witnessed the defeat of Pisa, off the Ligurian island of Meloria, when her sons—fifty, they say—left broken-hearted sweethearts and wives to mourn their untimely deaths. Then family feuds drenched Rapallo streets with blood ; Fieschi, Grimaldi and their country allies fought to a finish Doria, Spinola, delle Torre and Marchioni. Corsairs made sport and slaughter of the Rapellese : the dreaded Dragut—whom Princess Peretta Doria befriended—sacked the place in 1549, outraged the women and bore off the men as slaves. Many heroic deeds were done.

Bartolommeo Maggiocco, a youth of seventeen years of age, seeing the carnage and brutality, left his father's house and rushed through the lines of wild armed men to the abode of his sweetheart. Snatching the fainting girl by the hand, he dragged and carried her beyond the



LA SIGNORINETTA MARGHERITA BRIGNOLE-SALE

Anthony Vandyck.

PALAZZO ROSSO. GENOA.



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zone of danger, receiving, as he fled, not one but many shots. Alas ! the girl was struck too, and fatally, but Bartolommeo bore her in his arms to the summit of Montallegro, and there she died. Bartolommeo was never seen again : her body received Christian burial, but his may be in the deep. The story of the “ Loves of Bartolommeo and Angela ” is told upon a marble slab outside the pilgrimage Church of the Madonna.

Everyone who visits Rapallo climbs through the rich olive-yards and under the shady ilex-oaks, right over crumbling rock and scented heather, to the famous shrine of the miraculous picture of the Madonna of the Mountain. The view, the finest on either Riviera, is enough to repay the venture, even if one has no taste for romance. It was on 2nd July 1557 that a poor but honest peasant, a tiller of the soil of the village of San Giacomo di Canevole, eight miles from Rapallo as the crow flies, right beyond Monte Rosa, wearied by his toil, fell asleep in a sequestered nook. It was his noontide siesta and he had recited his “ *Angelus*.” Suddenly called by name, Giovanni Chichizola saw a glorious vision of the Madonna, who thus addressed him : “ Fear not, she whom you see is Christ’s Mother, go at once to Rapallo, and show them all this picture of myself, which I give thee, and bid them care for it, here.” Stupefied with awe and wonder, the poor pious man was riveted to the spot, but he

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cried aloud for help, and shepherds, hearing, ran to his assistance. There they beheld Giovanni on his knees weeping before a lovely picture and at his side a trickling stream of crystal water, which had never been known before!

Giacopo Fiesco was Abbot of Rapallo, to him the peasants hurried and told their tale. With his cross-bearer, his censer-bearer, his gospeller, and men and women by the score, he scaled—all chanting as they went—the rugged mountain-side. Good heed was paid to Giovanni's story, and, reverently, the Sacred Picture in its golden frame was wrapped in a silken humeral, and all drank of the sweet water, whilst they dropped their beads. That night the Madonna was lodged in the *Canonica*, preparatory for the morrow's hallowing Mass. At Prime the good priest looked in vain for the heavenly treasure—it was nowhere to be found; but, as he wondered, there came running down the street fleet girls and boys, who, with their elders, had climbed the steep ascent to drink betimes of the miraculous brook. The children cried hysterically, "The Madonna is by the brook!" Sure enough, by what agency no man knew, the precious Icon was once more fixed upon its original rocky bed. Again a solemn procession wended its way to rescue the wonderful Picture, and it was carried to Rapallo with ecstatic devotion and placed upon the high altar of the parish

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Church of Santa Margherita di Pescino, and venerated there. Night fell and morning dawned but no picture of the Madonna was to be seen ; she was once more at her favoured spot on the top of Monte Rosa ! The will of the Holy Mother was no longer questioned, and men and women and little children set to work with might and will to level the mountain top. Then was built the splendid church which now forms a welcome beacon to fishers out at sea. Within its sacred walls may be read, by the help of hundreds and hundreds of *ex voto* memorials, the story of Rapallo and Rapallese for four hundred years. The *fiesta* of the Madonna di Montallegro is held in July : it is a famous pilgrimage from all parts of the Riviera and from Tuscany. Whilst the elders assist at Mass, and recite their litanies, the children sing, as they do at Christmas :

“ Voglia al caro genitore,  
Conserva di vita il fiore  
E alla Mamma, in sua bontà,  
Sino e tarda e lunga età.”

“ La Madonna di Montallegro ” hangs in every cottage round about Rapallo : she has fresh flowers set before her every day by devout maidens who never pass her without a curtsy and a cross. Up high, upon the ceiling of the mountain sanctuary, is a beautiful picture by the Ligurian artist, Francesco Boero of Rapallo,

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of angels transporting the recumbent Madonna upon their wings to her best-loved-shrine. The miraculous spring now flows out of the high altar and the Holy Picture itself is safe in the tabernacle. Simple hearty hymns and psalms rise ceaselessly from throats of devout worshippers and mingle their refrain with the alleluias of the angels of the skies. The star-spangled blue mantle of Mary, "Queen of Heaven," encircles her beauteous earthly throne above Rapallo—a fitting Court for so sweet a Sovereign—the loveliest panorama in all Liguria.

Rapallo and its *contado* were famous for the excellence of their elementary schools as early as the thirteenth century. Medicine, surgery and philosophy were the sciences cultivated by the more advanced students. Doctors seemed to hail chiefly from the uplands of San Fruttuoso and Camogli, and quite a considerable number of experts were women, indeed the "*Medice di Rapallo*" became famous in foreign Courts and Universities. "*La Divina da Zoagli*" was the title bestowed in the fifteenth century, upon a very remarkable woman—Donna Teodora Chichizola, probably an ancestress of simple Giovanni della Madonna di Montallegro. She was born at Borzoli, a mile from Zoagli, and gained her doctorate at Bologna, being premiated also at Padua. Her teacher was Maestro Bartolommeo Della Torre



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of Rapallo, a noted writer on surgery and midwifery. The fame of "*La Divina*" reached Genoa, and she was summoned to attend Battista Montaldo, son of the Doge, who had caught fever and received wounds at Lodi in 1413. Her treatment was entirely successful, and, in addition to a goodly fee, his Serenity gained the exemption of the fair doctor and her descendants from public taxes. Romance is never far away from serious studies, and the story, perhaps apocryphal, goes on to state that—like many another grateful patient—the convalescent Battista made his sapient and charming physician the mistress of his home !

The science of medicine, in the early Renaissance, included the mysterious cults of alchemy and astrology. A Rapallo devotee of both was one Serena, sister of Maestro Giovanni Agostino Molfino: she gained the distinction of "*Dottoressa*" from the communal authorities. In 1438 "Dr" Serena was sent for to Genoa to prescribe for Doge Antonio Campofregoso. She achieved a great success and returned to Rapallo with the added style of "*Vaticinatrice*"—"Soothsayer." It seems, from the family annals of the Doge, that his doctress examined his hands and cast his horoscope, as well as administered potent medicine with the universal drench of rosemary—"compounded with rare drugs in her science." Maestro Battista Darigo, her instructor, was

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brother of Maestro Giovanni, a Court Physician to Pope Giulio II., and both were natives of Rapallo. Rapallo still retains its medical fame, with its genial climate and its freedom from dust, and very many seekers after health flock thither to their permanent benefit in mind and body. Very likely the clear sparkling water of the district has much to do with its medical reputation. “*Lascio dietro di me due gran medici—la dieta e l’Acqua*”—“I keep by me two great doctors—diet and water”—is true of Rapallo and the Rapallese.

### III

Chiavari is the “Key” of Eastern Liguria, the “hub” of the Riviera di Levante, for all things which are especially characteristic centre in the wide semicircle of her gracious plain. The rugged mountains have receded from the shore and the greedy sea has not eaten up the fore-shore, so that there is space to grow and stretch oneself. The people of Chiavari are very busy folk and maintain the reputation of their ancestors of Roman barbarian times, good soldiers, handy sailors and expeditious artisans. The busyhiss of the restless silk shuttle, the hammered crash of ships’ rivets driven home, the musical shuffle of interchanging lace bobbins and the soft swish of the endlessly curling wood shav-

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ings of the chair-makers are all blended in the clear bright air. In the streets mingle affably blood-stained pressers of the valuable olive grape, white sand-dusted quarrymen, greasy inodorous soap-boilers and sea-tanned dockers of the port, chatting out and through the many finely sculptured arches and doorways of the town.

Perhaps Chiavari is best known as the nursery of hurdy-gurdy boys ; as the manufactory of the *sedie di Chiavari*—light olive and fig wood furniture noted for strength and durability ; and as the home of the parents and family of Garibaldi the “Liberator.” If you chance to ask an Italian organ-grinder in any British town—and there still are hundreds of them—whence he hails, “*Da Chiavari, Signore,*” is the sure reply. The native cult of chair-making is practised not alone for the ease of human integuments but for the picturesque culture of the vine. Pergolas, of course, are everywhere, with their beautiful burdens of green tendrils, painted leaves, and ripening bunches of gold and purple grapes ; but the vine-growers of Chiavari and its vicinity train their vines over wooden chairs of great and little growth. The effect is probably bizarre but the result is excellent.

Guiseppe Garibaldi was born at Nice, but his parents were recent immigrants : their home was at Chiavari. The Garibaldi claim Garibaldo,

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Duke of Bavaria in 584, as their earliest founder. In 1060 Paolo di Garibaldi was the *Capitano* of the Commune of Chiavari, but in 1528 the name was enrolled in the "*Libro d'Oro*" of Genoa, and there remained till 1792, when the last of the family in Genoa was Guiseppe, grand-uncle of the patriot. The branch to which his heroic nephew belonged settled in the old home of the family in the seventeenth century, but was on the move again when Messir Angelo Garibaldi took his family, all of Chiavari, to Nice. With him went his eldest son, Domenico Antonio, and his wife Rosa Raimondi, the "Liberator's" parents. Guiseppe made Chiavari his home after Nice was transferred to France, and there resorted for rest and refreshment.

The hosts of the *osterie* of Chiavari have borne a somewhat tarnished reputation, not indeed for excellence, or the reverse, of their menus, but on account of greed for the contents of their guests' money-bags. It is said that Luca Cambiaso, the Genoese painter, when he was busy painting "The Last Judgment," in the Church of La Madonna delle Grazie, was threatened with imprisonment by his landlady for not paying up what he owed her. By hook or by crook at last he satisfied her claims, and then, to be quits, he painted her in the "Judgment" in the clutches of the devil—and there she has been ever since for all men to see and scorn !

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The River Entella separates Chiavari from Lavagna—the Entella of which Dante speaks in his “*Purgatorio*” :

“ . . . . . questo rio  
Intra Siestri e Chiavari s’adima  
Una fumana bella. . . . .”

Across the bridge the melancholy exile from Florence passed to and fro, the guest of the Fieschi and Malaspini, straining perhaps his weary eyes across the wide gulf to gain, perchance, a vision of the fair coast of Tuscany. The Marquises of Malaspina and the Counts of Lavagna were rivals, time out of mind: the former were the Emperor’s lieutenants, the latter stood for home and Pope. The name of one *gentildonna*, at least, of the house of Malaspina has been handed down with distinction: Bianca Malaspina, wife of Ambrogio Spinola—“*Giovane fra le belle bellissima e oltra la bellezza, un vero e chiaro specchio d’onestà e di prudenza*”—“Youthful, of all lovely girls the loveliest, and, besides her beauty, a pure and bright example of modesty and prudence.” The family of the Malaspini, however, by reason of the beauty of its daughters and the opulence of their wedding portions, was weakened by the marriages of heiresses to *alieni*. The Royal House of Austria, for example, carried away many a lovely bride, and with her much wealth, so that the Malaspini were impoverished.

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Almost all the churches and monasteries from Rapallo to Sestri di Levante were built and endowed by the Fieschi, and, at the same time, artfully held by Fieschi incumbents. Ruins of the ancestral castle of the family still cling to the hills of Lavagna, almost hidden under the great green blades and giant tassellated spikes of ruddy aloes. The Basilica of San Salvatore was the Valhalla of the famous House ; generations of pious lords and devout ladies lie in its vaults. Their once splendid palaces, around the piazza, witness no longer bridals—human or divine—but have become shabby hovels for untidy peasants. The Contessa Marinetta Fiesca di San Fronte, the last survivor of an illustrious line, retains no more than a patch of garden ground, where once were the monkish cloisters. The last Conte di Lavagna, Adriano Fiesco, died in 1858.

The well-kept driving road from Chiavari to Spezia springs us over the torrent bed of the Entella, jolts us well along the cobbly main street of Lavagna, and then hugs impatiently the rocky beach, as though expecting to reveal, as each sharp corner is turned, Venere di Ligure, springing unclothed and fresh from the green and yellow sea foam. At length we descry Sestri di Levante, beloved of John Ruskin, and we think we shall enjoy an early lunch, a smoke and a short siesta at the *Osteria Ghio*, where the wine is

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good, and where perhaps we may gather up some gossip ; but no, there is barely time to change the team of five spanking horses and then the greedy road once more absorbs us. As though weary of its fruitless search for female beauty on the beach, at a tangent it tears away past Trigoso, and bounds over the rolling upland. The steaming roadsters have heavy collar-work, for they twist their bits this way and that, up sharp zigzags ever rising.

The whole plain we are leaving behind abounds in greenery, and out of clumps of chestnuts and mounds of walnut-trees rise fifty slender campanili, their bells clanging fitfully ever and anon. What tales they could tell—had their iron tongues speech—of brides, baptisms and burials ! Along-side are many-a-fifty towering cypresses—man's work and God's competing in elegance and height. Tongues parched with thirst welcome luscious lemons, peaches, figs and grapes, offered cheaply enough by *contadine* at the wayside. The girls are ready for compliments, which to them are no mere words of flattery : they merit admiration, for they are comely, strong and approachable—unsophisticated daughters of beauteous Mother Eve, in short scarlet petticoats and white linen blouses and kerchiefs, feet and hair unspoiled.

Soon we perceive that verdant Nature is leaving us, and after passing the dairy cows of

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Casaggi we grope under the deep shadows of lofty pine-trees where life is still and scarce. At Bracco we pull up for luncheon, but the prospect is hardly pleasing for the inner man, for the *osteria* is not palatial, indeed it is rough and rude of aspect. The pièce de resistance is a chunk of grey multi-boiled, perhaps pickled, beef, tough as leather, the cheese is hard as wood, and the bread bears it company. A smiling hostess says she can make some *ravioli*, if only we give her time enough, and we know she has a sack of sweet macaroni and a jar or two of new conserve; an omelet too is in the making of her well-shaped hands. Her man produces red wine, he calls it "Monterosso," so we fare regally and end all with an effusion of new roast coffee not to be bettered anywhere.

Now we come out upon a bleak mountain district where Nature is as bare as Eve of old, with peeps at the distant sea and grand views of snow-capped aiguilles still farther off: only the painted butterflies remind us of luxuriant Liguria. At Baracca the summit of the pass is attained, and a halt is called, at three o'clock, and men are fed and horses foddered for the swift downward course to Spezia, which is reached without further incident at six o'clock, in time for a very welcome dinner. By rail you see none of the beauties of this fair stretch of the Riviera, for you are in and out of tunnels all the



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way, and the people you chat with are not good-natured peasants but cosmopolitan tourists with absurd fads and notions.

From Borghetto di Vara, on the descent to Spezia, a very delightful view is gained right down the green valley to Levante, on the coast, as picturesque a place as any in Liguria. In the Middle Ages it was a fief of the noble family of Passano, but was ceded, with Sarzana and Pietra Santa, to the great Banco di San Giorgio at Genoa ; hence everywhere has been sculptured St George, the maiden and the dragon. Here in vintage-time such scenes of bacchanalian joy are witnessed as old classic writers have described. The grapes are of unusual richness and their juice has a potency beyond compare. Valle Santa, Monterosso, and Corniglia are names to conjure with in viticulture. The best vines are reached only by steep ladders, reared against sheer precipices, where narrow gullies, running up the hills, form natural pergolas, and, as you pass below, weighty bunches of ripe grapes seem ready to drop upon your head at every step. *Schiacchetrà* is the local name for this famous golden nectar of the gods, known commercially as “Vino Santo” ; it is made by partially drying the grapes before expressing the juice, and this is repeated with the resultant—sweetest, strongest, natural wine of Italy.

La Spezia is like an overgrown tom-boy

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amongst her more staid and venerable sisters. She was unknown to the ancients and her gulf was named "Luna" when Pliny called the decayed town of Luni "the first city of Etruria." This was destroyed by the Saracens in 1016, but its name is preserved in "*La Lunigiana*"—the hinterland. Luck stands for very much in this world, especially in relation to mankind, and things and places. Porto Venere, for example, was, in the Renaissance, a great shipping centre; now little more than a name, for La Spezia has stepped into the shoes of Venus, and her port is the arsenal of Mars. The island of Palmaria suggests, by its name, a higher destiny than that of serving, as it does, for a penal settlement and for a penitentiary. Byron's ghost hovers over the strait, for, did he not swim hence from San Terenzo, six miles across the gulf, and, in the so-called "Byron's Grotto" write "The Corsair" making love the while to simple smugglers' daughters in and out of caves and *case*? All the poets loved Italian women in the past; no doubt such as there are now do so still!

Lerici—almost absorbed by the spreading arms of La Spezia—cradle of warriors, was only lately the home of poets: Villa Maccarani was Lord Byron's home—Villa Magni, Shelley's. Peace, beauty and repose were in the atmosphere of the old-world town, slumbering in its wealth of ambrosial gardens, looked on reprovingly by



PEOPLE AND COUNTRY OF CORSICA.

AFTER AN ENGRAVING BY I. CLARK.



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the Romanesque church and the Norman castle. Tears sprang copiously from the eyes of sorrowing peasant women, gathering kelp, who discovered, on 22nd July 1822, two battered corpses, cast up by the turbulent sea at Bocca Lerici—they were John Williams and Percy Bysshe Shelley, shipwrecked off the coast. By the law of Tuscany, which was observed beyond the frontier, all bodies cast ashore were burned, as a precaution against plague. Accordingly the two corpses, which had been rudely buried beneath the shingle, were cremated, beneath the full glare of an August sun. Captain John Trelawny and Leigh Hunt directed the burning, with incense, wine, salt and oil, the accompaniments of the Greek crematory observances. When the pyre had cooled they gathered fragments of the jaws and skulls and, strange to relate, Shelley's heart entire. These relics were consigned to the hallowed soil of the Protestant cemetery in Rome.

Shelley loved Lerici, and there he made his poetry—"The Triumph of Life," and many sonnets. He was beloved by the poor people for his benevolence, his modesty and affability, and for his love of children. Thus sang he in Lerici's bay :

" The soft coolness of the dark hours  
Of dew, and sweet warmth left by day,  
Were scatter'd o'er the rippling bay :

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The fisher, with his flaring lamp,  
His spear in hand, by low rocks damp,  
Crept and so struck the fish, which came  
To worship the delusive flame.

. . . . .  
Too happy they, whose pleasure sought  
Extinguishes all sense and thought,  
Of the regret that pleasure leaves."

Sarzana, only six miles north of Lerici, once known as "Luni Nova," when what remained of interest in devastated Luni was transferred to its sister commune, came into the possession of Genoa in 1475, in exchange with Florence for Leghorn. The tombs of the Malaspini are here, and many other notables of their day beside. The Tuscan family of Buonaparte dwelt at Sarzana up to 1612, when they migrated to Corsica. This pleasant town became the home of one of Boccaccio's heroines, and her story may as well be told.

Messir Ricciardo di Chinzicca was a well-reputed notary and judge at Pisa, and, having made a considerable fortune by the fees and accidents of his profession, he determined to ally himself to a wife, who should adorn his *casa* and do honour to his name. His mind was set on beauty of form rather than upon amplitude of dowry, and, after searching in vain among the marriageable *gentildonne* of the city, he took his journey, Don Quixote like, into the *contado*, in quest of what he wanted. Many a peasant

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girl as well as gentle born attracted his fancy, but, being very hard to please, his wanderings led him along the littoral of Tuscany, and across the border into Genoese Liguria. Tales had reached him many a time of the good looks of the damsels of that favoured coast, and he now bore himself more gallantly than ever, and felt no doubt that Dame Fortune was about to reward him with success.

At Sarzana, resorting as was his wont to the well and oven, where women congregate, one early midday there chanced to come that way, with her empty pitcher in her hand, the most beauteous vision of fresh womanhood he had ever seen. To introduce himself at once, and his intentions more leisurely, was the resolve of a moment, and amorous Messir Ricciardo and modest Donna Felicia were soon tête-à-tête and thus they walked away. She was the daughter of one Bartolommeo di Messir Lotto Gualandi, and was accounted the belle of the neighbourhood. Messir Bartolommeo listened to the story the worthy judge unfurled, but, whilst he had due regard to the goodly raiment and fat saddlebags of his visitor, he looked askance at him for a Pisan. The Gualandi were of Genoese origin, and the spite of Pisa against Genoa was proverbial and provocative.

“ Yes,” said Messir Bartolommeo, “ you may have my girl, but you shall not take her back to

## Heroines of Genoa

Pisa. You may settle here if you will, and there are excellent properties to be bought. Make her home yours and yours her people, or else you may as well go away at once."

Messir Ricciardo was set on winning Donna Felicia, so the marriage contract was made out and the marriage ceremony performed, and the couple set up together in a *castello* on the outskirts of the town. So far so good as concerned Messir Ricciardo, but Madonna Felicia was soon undeceived about the purpose of the marriage. Never was there a more stupid or unlovable a man : his whole interest seemed to be in ecclesiastical observances, fast and feast were the one theme of the ménage. The poor madonna pined, she was made for love and got none, her health gave way, so her unsympathetic spouse took her out to sea, hoping that a fishing expedition would restore her gaiety.

Things promised well, apparently, till one fine day, when Madonna Felicia and two lady friends were out in their boat alone, the galley of a well-known, much-feared pirate of the main bore down upon the helpless party, Pagano da Monaco was his name, and gleefully he bore his pretty prizes down into his private cabin. Messir Ricciardo was a witness of the rape, but took no steps to rescue his fascinating wife. He quickly rowed his own boat ashore and fled to his *castello*, thinking more of his fiscal policy than of marital



## Riviera Romances

duty. The corsair, as all corsairs are, was handsome, bold and amorous, and he fell deeply in love with lovely Madonna Felicia. She was not unresponsive: poor thing, she had yearned for this, had she not? They sailed away wrapped in each other's arms. Messir Ricciardo, stirred up by the outraged Messir Bartolemmeo—who would not so lightly lose his child as the husband did his wife—took steps leisurely to track the loving couple. At Camogli he discovered the pirate vessel and boarded her. Pagano asked his business: “I want my wife,” he said, “you have her here.”

“If that is so,” replied Pagano, “we soon can settle the matter, for the lady you name belongs to me, and I do not think that for one moment she will look favourably upon such an old fossil!” With that, the pirate called for the madonna. She appeared richly dressed—Messir Ricciardo had never seen her so arrayed—and looked at him with supreme indifference. “My love,” spoke up the husband, “it has cost me dear to take you a-fishing. I was never so grieved in all my life as when I lost you, and yet you do not seem to recognise me, so silent and austere you appear. My Felicia, I have come to ransom you from this gentleman, who has taken you so far from home.”

Smiling scornfully, the lady replied: “Do you dare to speak to me thus? Take care what

## Heroines of Genoa

you say, and pray do not make a mistake. I do not remember ever to have seen you before ! ”

“ What,” exclaimed Ricciardo, “ you plainly see me, your husband, Ricciardo di Chinzzicca. Look upon me, and come to my arms, my dear wife.”

After a pause, which seemed interminable to Capitano Pagano, Madonna Felicia spoke : “ It is true, and I am not so forgetful but that I know you, my lawful husband, but a sorry one you are. I am young and lively, and I require using like other women, I want much more than food and clothes and church observances. I have found a man worthy of the name, whom I like well and who loves me heartily. I intend to remain with him, so you, Ricciardo di Chinzzicca, may go hence at once, and keep your Lents by yourself ! ”

Messir Ricciardo feebly protested and abused the *Capitano*. “ Think of your poor parents at Sarzana,” he said, “ and of their shame and distress, and above all of your own honour, Felicia.”

“ Sir,” at once replied Madonna Felicia, “ I desire nobody to be careful for my honour. My parents should have known better than to have married me to such an old *Sacristano* ; as for you, Ricciardo, I am heartily sick of you, so be off at once. I mean to stay where I am ! ”

With that she bounced off, and when Messir

## Riviera Romances

Ricciardo would have followed her, the *Capitano* pushed him back and ordered him to leave his ship at once, if he did not wish to be put in irons. The stupid husband went back to Pisa—he avoided Sarzana naturally—a sadder and a wiser man ; but became, when the story leaked out, the object of derision among all the people there. Pagano married Felicia that very day, and perhaps they sang to one another the Boccaccio sonnet :

“ Of all I want or wish possess,  
Which of us here should say but I ;  
Come, sweet Cupid, most welcome guest,  
The constant source of all our joy,  
And teach my late desponding lyre  
No more to plaintive notes to turn,  
But mirth and am’rous joy inspire,  
Whilst in thy fragrant flame I burn.”



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[*N.B.*—The comparative dearth of Genoese literary authorities is partially due to the fact that many publishers and booksellers in Genoa failed in the disastrous “eighties,” and their stocks were scattered and destroyed.]

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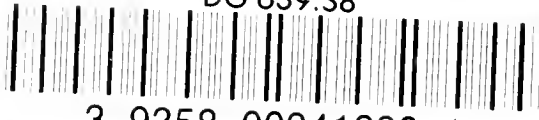
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